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L. B E R I A

ON THE HISTORY  
OF THE  
BOLSHEVIK ORGANIZATIONS  
IN  
TRANSCAUCASIA

SPEECH DELIVERED AT A MEETING  
OF PARTY FUNCTIONARIES  
JULY 21-22, 1935

*Translated  
from the fourth Russian edition*



INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS  
NEW YORK



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Comrades!

A study and understanding of the history of our Party is a most important medium in the Marxist-Leninist education of the members of the Party and the Young Communist League.

Comrade Stalin in his historic article "Questions Concerning the History of Bolshevism" focussed the attention of the Party organizations on the task of studying the history of our Party in a Bolshevik way.

Comrade Stalin wrote at that time of the need:

"... to raise the questions concerning the history of Bolshevism to the proper level, to put the study of the history of our Party on scientific, Bolshevik lines, and to concentrate attention against the Trotskyite and all other falsifiers of the history of our Party by systematically unmasking them." \*

This task requires that the teaching of the history of the Party, the study of anti-Party groupings in the history of our Party and of their methods of struggle against the Party line should be raised to the proper level.

This task requires that Party members know not only how the Party fought and overcame the Constitutional-Democrats (Cadets), the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks and the Anarchists, but also how the Party fought and overcame the Trotskyites, the "Democratic Centralists," the "Workers' Opposition," the Zinovievites, the Rights, the Rightist-"Leftist" freaks, etc.

To raise Bolshevik vigilance to the proper level and arm Communists against all enemies of our Party it is necessary that every member of the Party know the heroic experience of how the Lenin-Stalin Party was built and how it fought; it is necessary that he know and understand not only the successes and victories of the Party but also how they were won by the Party in the struggle against all the enemies of Leninism.

\* Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. II, p. 405, Co-operative Publishing Society, Moscow, 1933.

Now, with socialism victorious, with the great cultural and political growth of the broad masses of the working people and the intensification of resistance on the part of the remnants of the defeated class enemy, it is indispensable to raise the level of Marxist-Leninist education in every way, and first and foremost the level of knowledge of the Bolshevik history of our Party.

The study of the history of the Party must not be restricted to a bare description of events and facts in the heroic history of Bolshevism, but must explain the economic and political situation of the country, give a complete picture of the intricate and multifarious struggle of all classes in pre-revolutionary Russia and of the struggle of the oppressed nations for national emancipation under the leadership of the working class and its Bolshevik Party.

The history of the Party must be set forth in such a way as to give the Marxist explanation of the history of our Party's fight against anti-Bolshevik trends and factions within the Party and the working class, demonstrating the supreme importance in principle of this struggle for Leninism.

What we need now is that the members of the Party and the Young Communist League study more seriously and acquire a more profound knowledge of the history of Bolshevism, of the history of the Party's struggle against all anti-Leninist deviations and trends, of the concrete situation in which the Party of Lenin and Stalin worked.

We need a study of the history of our Party such as would ensure the assimilation of the heroic experience of the Bolsheviks' struggle against the numerous enemies of Leninism and arm the members of the Party and the Young Communist League to combat the enemies of the Party, to combat the survivals of the ideas and views of all the defeated counter-revolutionary, anti-Party groups.

In recent years the Party organizations of Transcaucasia have done considerable work in the propagation and study of the history of the Party. But our achievements in this field are obviously inadequate. *We are especially behind in the Bolshevik treatment and study of the Bolshevik organizations of Transcaucasia and Georgia, in the study of the struggle of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks for the cause of Lenin and Stalin.*

The Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia have acquired enormous historical experience in the struggle to build the Leninist Party, a struggle which went on for decades under the direct guidance of the leader of our Party, Comrade Stalin.

The whole history of the Transcaucasian Bolshevik organizations and the entire revolutionary movement of Transcaucasia and

of Georgia have from the very outset been inseparable from the work and name of Comrade Stalin. (*Loud applause.*)

The Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of Georgia and the Seventh Congress of the Communist organizations of Transcaucasia paid special attention to the questions of treating and studying the history of the Communist organizations of Transcaucasia and of Georgia.

The mistakes and distortions occurring in the works of some Communist historians were severely criticized at these congresses.

In its decisions, the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of Georgia gave the following instruction:

“Noting the distortions of the history of the Party and the revolutionary movement in Georgia and Transcaucasia occurring in the works of a number of Communist historians, the Congress deems it necessary for all Party organizations of Georgia to concentrate still greater attention against attempts to falsify the history of Bolshevism.”

After the Congress our organizations improved their work of collecting and elaborating material on the history of the Bolshevik organizations and the revolutionary movement of Transcaucasia.

However, *what has been done is as yet very little*; there is still a great deal of data and documents to be collected.

The Tbilisi branch of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) has not yet been able to issue a collection of documents and data on the history of the Party organizations and the revolutionary movement of Transcaucasia, nor has it published a single original work on this subject.

It must be admitted that the history of the Party organizations of Transcaucasia and Georgia is still far from having been fully investigated and adequately treated.

As for the expositions of the struggle of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks given in the writings of Ph. Makharadze (*The History of the Labour Movement in Georgia, The Year 1905 in Transcaucasia, The Thirtieth Anniversary of the Tiflis Organization, Outlines of the Revolutionary Movement in Transcaucasia*, and others), they contain a number of errors in principle and of a historical nature, distort historical facts and events and present a number of points in the history of the Party *dishonestly*.

So far Comrade Makharadze has not taken the trouble to revise his works and correct the mistakes and distortions they contain.

A. Yenukidze and M. Orakhelashvili, since exposed as enemies of the people, smuggled deliberate distortion and falsification of the history of the Transcaucasian organization into their books.

Members of the Party and the Y.C.L., non-Party workers and collective farmers are showing tremendous interest in the study of the Bolshevik organizations and the revolutionary movement of Transcaucasia. The Party organizations are pressing us for literature that will correctly present the history of our Party organizations.

Since the Seventh Congress of the Communist organizations of Transcaucasia and the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of Georgia, we have already collected some data and documents on the history of our Party organizations.

The Transcaucasian Territorial Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia have commissioned me to clarify *some questions* (facts and events) concerning the history of the Bolshevik organizations of Transcaucasia and Georgia on the basis of these data and documents.

# I

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## *On the History of the Inception and Formation of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia (1897-1904)*

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The first seeds of Marxism were brought into Transcaucasia in the first half of the 'nineties by Russian Social-Democrats who had been exiled by the tsarist government from the central regions of Russia (Joseph Kogan, Ivan Iuzin, G. Franceſchi and others), on the one hand, and, on the other, by the "legal Marxists" of Georgia who had been abroad (Noah Jordania, Karlo Chkhedze, and others).

The first Marxist, Social-Democratic organization in Georgia was the "Messameh Dassy." Noah Jordania's group (1893-98) was the principal group of the "Messameh Dassy," which propagated Marxism through the Georgian legal press (the newspapers *Kvali*\* and *Moambe*\*\*\*) in Tiflis, then the centre of all Transcaucasia.

The name "Messameh Dassy" (which means "third group") was given to it by the writer G. Tsereteli<sup>1</sup> in his speech at the funeral of the writer Ignatius Ninoshvili in Guria, on which occasion the program of the Marxist youth was publicly set forth (by S. Jibladze and others).

In naming this rising Social-Democratic movement the "Messameh Dassy," George Tsereteli considered that the new genera-

\* *Kvali* (*The Furrow*)—a daily newspaper in the Georgian language, an organ of the liberal-nationalist trend.

Between 1893 and 1897 it was under the editorship of G. Tsereteli. At the end of 1897 it was acquired by the majority group of the "Messameh Dassy" (N. Jordania and others) and henceforth became the mouth-piece of "legal Marxism."

After the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions developed within the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, *Kvali* became the organ of the Georgian Mensheviks. It was suppressed by the tsarist government in 1904.

\*\* *Moambe* (*The Herald*)—a monthly magazine of the liberal-nationalist trend. It appeared from 1894 to 1908, in the Georgian language.

tion—the Marxist youth—was the continuer of the work of the two preceding political trends of the Georgian intelligentsia in the second half of the nineteenth century: the feudal progressive trend, headed by the writer I. Chavchavadze,<sup>2</sup> and the bourgeois progressive trend headed by G. Tsereteli himself. In his opinion, the new current was to be the political successor of the bourgeois liberal trend.

In an editorial on the “Messameh Dassy” the *Kvali* said:

“Since the ‘nineties a progressive breeze has been blowing again. Since 1893 individuals from among the youth, with an unusual trend and an original program of their own, have appeared in Georgian letters through the columns of the journal *Kvali*. They are adherents of the theory of economic materialism. I. Ninoshvili must be considered the leader of this ‘Dassy’ [group] in *belles-lettres* and N. Jordania in journalism. The honour of noticing this new progressive phenomenon in our lives sooner than anyone else belongs to one of the representatives of the ‘Meoredassists,’ Mr. G. Tsereteli, and it was he who baptized the new group the ‘Messameh Dassy.’ That this group is to become the real successor of the ‘Meoredassists’... is clearly shown by the literary and journalistic facts of the past.”\*

The “Messameh Dassy” first arose in 1893. One of its founders, S. Jibladze, formulated its main ideas as follows:

“We say that

“1) During these 25-30 years a new era has begun in our lives. Its characteristic feature is manifest in special economic relations, which means commodity exchange, trade. Here the old master gives way to the new, money. Money destroys the old and builds the new; it divides the people into two parts; two classes arise—the rich and the poor. The old distinction of estates is a fiction. Exchange is brought about by the division of labour, by the production of commodities. The production of commodities is precisely capitalism in general.

“2) Capitalism has several stages or phases. The last stage of capitalism is ‘large-scale production.’ We have entered this stage but are not yet intrenched.

“3) If the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in our country are not sufficiently defined, that does not mean that we have had neither the one nor the other. In so far as our big landowners grow rich through land incomes they are bourgeois. Add

\* *Kvali*, No. 46, 1897.

to them the manufacturer, the usurer, the merchant and others. . . . Our proletariat is a mixed organism. The majority have small allotments which give them the mere title of property owners, but in reality they are proletarianized elements (Bogano). They are working people whose fate depends both on the commodity market and the labour market. They are on the way to complete proletarianization.

"4) In our literature a new (third) group ('dassy') has arisen. This group (dassy) is the exact opposite of the old group (dassy), which has no basis. It is progressive, whereas the latter is retrogressive. So far the bourgeoisie does not have its own organization in our literature, has no group (dassy) in it to express its interests, unless the reviews by Mr. N. Nikoladze in *Moambe* are taken into consideration. The bourgeoisie functions in life. In so far as it destroys the old patriarchal system by its activity, it is progressive; in so far as it ruins the people, it is retrogressive. The motto of the new group (dassy) is: 'Scientific investigation of the new trend of life, and struggle, not against its tendencies—that goes on without us—but against those consequences which demoralize the people.' In this respect struggle means enlightening the oppressed and fighting for their interests. The enemy of this new trend is at the same time the enemy of the oppressed.

"This is our outlook upon our life in general and upon literature in particular."\*

Thus the "Messameh Dassy" recognized the progressiveness of capitalism and pursued the idea of class differentiation and class struggle as the content of social and political life.

The majority of the "Messameh Dassy," however, never carried the idea of class struggle as far as a Marxist understanding of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The ideologist and author of all the programmatic works of the "Messameh Dassy" was Noah Jordania.

In his writings Jordania maintained that capitalist development was necessary and progressive, preached the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the liberal bourgeoisie, and of a national renaissance of Georgia.

Noah Jordania never arrived at a Marxist understanding of the class struggle of the proletariat. From the very beginning Noah Jordania maintained and propagated the bourgeois-nationalist thesis that the economic life of capitalism, national culture and

\* *Ibid.*, No. 14, p. 15, March 26, 1895.



national character unite all the classes of society into a single national organism, and that all classes of a nation are equally interested in the regeneration of the nation.

He wrote:

“The Georgian nation has entered upon this historical path” (the capitalist path of development). “So far it has taken only the first step in this direction, and has thereby established itself on new ground. This has given the Georgian nation a firm foundation. The nation has been harnessed in a common yoke, has grown accustomed to joint life and joint activity. The ground has been prepared for a community of consciousness.”\*

The “Messameh Dassy” did not have a homogeneous political line. Its majority, headed by Jordania, constituted the “legal Marxism” group. In its writings on a number of fundamental questions of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, this group distorted the teachings of revolutionary Marxism, vulgarized Marxism and painted it over with nationalist colours.

Noah Jordania and the majority of the “Messameh Dassy” rejected the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement and denied the necessity of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

From the very beginning Jordania’s group adopted a nationalist position on the national question.

Noah Jordania advanced and maintained the theory that the bourgeoisie and the proletariat had common interests and should engage in national activity in common.

He wrote:

“A nation united materially is united ideologically also. Everyone strives to develop national labour, to strengthen the nation. . . . The peasant and the worker are just as interested in the greatness of the nation as the bourgeois merchant.”\*\*

Or:

“It is a rare thing to come across a Georgian who would not desire the improvement and development of our life. . . . Here, on this question, all sincere and honest workers are united, and inspired with one aim, are bravely devoting themselves to the public cause.”\*\*\*

\* N. Jordania, *Selected Works*, “Economic Development and Nationality” (1894), p. 27, Kultura Publishing House, 1911.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 9.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*, “Our Disagreement,” p. 257.

The majority of the "Messameh Dassy," headed by Jordania, maintaining that the capitalist development of Georgia was necessary and inevitable, and sharply criticizing the Georgian intelligentsia's trends derived from the feudal nobility and Narodnik ideology, saw for the most part only the positive, progressive side of capitalism; they admired the capitalist process which they expected would regenerate the Georgian people and did not raise the question of a revolutionary struggle against capitalism and the overthrow of the bourgeois system.

Jordania wrote:

"Europeanization is proceeding on Georgian soil, on the basis of Georgian culture. The home country and the foreign country, Georgia and Europe. To be a Georgian and a European is the new motto. The historical task of our time is to understand this phenomenon and to make the people conscious of it."\*

The majority of the "Messameh Dassy" and Noah Jordania did not go beyond an opportunist understanding of the class struggle of the proletariat, and considered themselves representatives of the whole Georgian people.

"The democratic group (dassy) must find a new soil for itself and so become the continuer of the old progressive group. 'Iberia' found such a soil among the princes and nobles. We seek this soil among the majority of the nation, irrespective of social status."\*\*

Proceeding from the point of view of the nation as a whole, Noah Jordania put the class struggle in a secondary position in the national movement, subordinating the class struggle of the proletariat to the interests of the bourgeois national movement. He wrote:

"This trend acquires two forms: the inner, *i. e.*, class, form and the outer, *i. e.*, national, form, the struggle between classes and between nations. The first" (the struggle between classes), "no matter how fierce, has a limit where those who are fighting stand together, are harnessed in one cultural and historical yoke. This creates what is called a nation, a national force. Here is a common border, beyond this there is another nation, within it there are classes, but around it there is a national force, a national culture, a national structure."\*\*\*

\* *Ibid.*, "Iberia and Nationality" (1897) p. 114.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 66.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*, "The Men of the 'Sixties," p. 165.

As far back as 1898-99, Noah Jordania came out openly as an apologist for West European imperialism, supporting the idea that capitalism had a civilizing mission in the colonial and backward countries, maintaining that backward colonial peoples must acknowledge the rule of foreign capital as historically necessary and progressive, and must appreciate the services of capitalism accordingly.

Jordania openly preached a social-imperialist thesis with regard to the Boer War.

This is what he wrote at the time:

"But sympathy for the Boers does not at all demand hatred towards the English. We sympathize with the Boers because they are a small nation and are defending their fatherland and their freedom. England? We must needs love England and sympathize with her in many respects. England is the cradle of everything that civilized mankind is proud of today.

"Let the Boers defend their small nation . . . but at the same time let Britain remain a great Britain, the apostle of a new life, the bearer of a new standard. Let her be the leader and the standard bearer of civilization."\*

Between 1893 and 1897 the following were among the members of the "Messameh Dassy": Noah Jordania, S. Jibladze, Ignatius Ninoshvili, Isidor Ramishvili, Mikha Tskhakaya, Philip Makharadze, S. Tsulukidze, Karlo Chkhaidze, Y. Vatsadze, Severian Jugeli, V. Tsabadze, D. Kalandarishvili, L. Darchiashvili, R. Kaladze, I. Kakabadze, Pyotr Geleishvili, A. Tsitlidze and I. Kvitsaridze.

*In 1897 Laddo Ketskhoveli joined this group, and in 1898 Comrade Stalin, bringing a new, revolutionary element into the life of the group.*

The "Messameh Dassy," and its majority headed by Jordania, played a certain positive part in the period of 1893 to 1898. It was this group that initiated the spread of Marxist ideas in Georgia and Transcaucasia and, notwithstanding all its defects, stimulated the revolutionary youth and leading workers to make the acquaintance of Marxism and study it.

The "Messameh Dassy" made a practice of sending young Marxists to foreign countries and the central regions of Russia for the purpose of studying Marxism. Noah Jordania, Karlo Chkhaidze, S. Tsulukidze and Akaky Chkhenkeli were among those who were sent abroad by the "Messameh Dassy."

\* *Kvali*, No. 51, "The Boers," 1899.

However, the majority of the "Messameh Dassy," headed by N. Jordania, limited itself to the peaceful, legal propagation of Marxist ideas and to narrow propagandist work in circles among the workers. The majority of the "Messameh Dassy" did not recognize the necessity for an illegal revolutionary press, mass political agitation and the organization of a revolutionary political struggle of the working class against tsarism and the bourgeoisie.

*In 1898 a revolutionary Marxist group, consisting of S. Tsulukidze, Laddo Ketskhoveli and J. Stalin, arose and took shape within the "Messameh Dassy." This group constituted a minority in the "Messameh Dassy" and differed from the majority on a number of fundamental questions.*

*The first serious disagreement arose in 1898 on the question of an illegal press.*

The minority of the "Messameh Dassy" held that an illegal press was highly important for propaganda and for the spreading of revolutionary Marxism, for political agitation against the autocracy and capitalism, for the organization of the political struggle of the working class and the building of a genuine proletarian revolutionary party, and they proposed that an illegal newspaper be established.

The majority of the "Messameh Dassy" headed by N. Jordania denied the need for an illegal press.

*The second serious disagreement arose in 1900 with the arrival of V. Kurnatovsky,\* a Russian Social-Democrat and follower of*

\* Victor Kurnatovsky was a trained, educated Marxist, a staunch and consistent supporter of Lenin's *Iskra*. He began his revolutionary career as a member of the "Narodnaya Volya" (People's Will) party. Because of his connection with this organization he was forced to spend three years in exile in Archangel Province, and in October 1892 he went abroad. In Zurich he graduated from the Polytechnical Institute as a chemical engineer. In 1893 he joined Plekhanov's "Emancipation of Labour" group. In August 1893 he participated in the work of the Zurich Congress of the Second International. In 1896 Kurnatovsky returned to work in Russia, but he was arrested while crossing the border and exiled to Minusinsk district for three years. Here, in exile, V. Kurnatovsky first made the acquaintance of V. I. Lenin, who was in exile from May 20, 1897, to February 11, 1900, in the village of Shushenskoye in the Minusinsk district. Kurnatovsky became a proletarian revolutionary, a consistent adherent of Lenin's for the rest of his life. He was one of the seventeen Social-Democrats who signed Lenin's "Protest of Russian Social-Democrats" against the "Credo" of the Economists. In the summer of 1900, after his term of exile had expired, the Party transferred Kurnatovsky to revolutionary work in Tiflis.

After his arrival at Tiflis, he established close contact with Comrade Stalin and became his intimate friend and co-worker.

*Iskra*. The question was whether activity should be confined to work in study circles or whether the time was not ripe to start mass agitation and an open struggle against the autocracy.

Comrade V. Kurnatovsky was a great help to the Georgian Social-Democrats in the application of the political line of Lenin's *Iskra*.

Workingmen of Tiflis who knew Kurnatovsky through his work and who shared his imprisonment in the Tiflis jail in 1902 recall the following about him:

"It must be said that all the comrades went to Kurnatovsky with their disagreements and disputes. His opinions and conclusions were always accepted without objections. Kurnatovsky was a staunch and unyielding revolutionary."\*

The minority demanded that the group proceed from activity in workers' study circles to leadership of the mass struggle of the working class, from propaganda to open forms of political struggle against the autocracy. They advanced the task of transforming economic strikes into political strikes, of organizing and carrying out workers' demonstrations, of making more use of the streets in the political struggle to overthrow the autocracy.

The majority of the "Messameh Dassy" headed by N. Jordania said there was no need to go over to mass agitation and an open struggle against the autocracy.

In 1899-1900, through a determined struggle against the majority of the "Messameh Dassy," the minority (Comrades Stalin, Ketskhoveli, Tsulukidze) increased its influence in the workers' Social-Democratic circles and succeeded in having the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization go over from narrow propaganda work in circles to mass agitation and a political struggle against the autocracy.

*This group (the minority of the "Messameh Dassy") was the embryo of revolutionary Social Democracy.*

Later we shall deal in more detail with the great revolutionary work of the comrades of the minority in the "Messameh Dassy."

The disagreements which had arisen between the majority and the minority of the "Messameh Dassy" in 1898-1900 became general differences of opinion on the question of Bolshevism and Menshevism after the Second Party Congress, particularly towards the end of 1904 and the beginning of 1905.

\* Tbilisi Branch of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, Folio 34, File No. 175.

The majority of the "Messameh Dassy," headed by N. Jordania, adopted the position of Menshevism, especially after Plekhanov went over to the Mensheviks; the minority, the group in the "Messameh Dassy" supporting Lenin's *Iskra*, held the Bolshevik position, and at the end of 1904, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, it took shape as a Leninist, Bolshevik organization.

At the end of 1904 and the beginning of 1905 the membership of the Tiflis Bolshevik organization included the following comrades among others: Comrades Stalin, A. Tsulukidze, M. Tskhakaya, A. Japaridze, St. Shaumyan, M. Davitashvili, S. Intskirveli, S. Spandaryan, Ph. Makharadze, and also leading workingmen like M. Bochoridze, V. Sturua, G. Telia, Z. Chodrishvili, Y. Kochetkov and G. Aznaurashvili.

Thus, in a resolute and uncompromising struggle against Georgian "legal Marxism," against the majority of the "Messameh Dassy" headed by N. Jordania, *a revolutionary, Social-Democratic Bolshevik organization supporting Lenin's "Iskra" arose, took shape and grew in Transcaucasia under the leadership of Comrade Stalin. (Applause.)*

But in a number of his works Comrade Ph. Makharadze gives an incorrect exposition of the history of the "Messameh Dassy" and a false estimation of its role and significance.

Comrade Makharadze represents the "Messameh Dassy" as a homogeneous, consistently revolutionary, Marxist, Social-Democratic organization and maintains silence about the great and serious disagreements and the strife within this group.

Makharadze writes about the "Messameh Dassy":

"This was an absolutely new trend, a new ideology which ran counter to the ideology of all the ruling classes and which declared a merciless struggle, a life-and-death struggle, against all classes of oppressors."\*

"In the Transcaucasian Social-Democratic organizations of that time" (Makharadze is dealing with the period of 1893-1904) "opportunistic and revisionist tendencies were rarely encountered in general; we may even say they did not exist at all." \*\*

"There was practically no need here for the Marxist trend to carry on a struggle against any other trend in the working class, as had to be done in other countries. . . ."\*\*\*

\* Ph. Makharadze, "The Thirtieth Anniversary of the Tiflis Organization," p. 25, 1925.

\*\* Ph. Makharadze, Introduction to A. Tsulukidze's book, 1927.

\*\*\* Ph. Makharadze, "The Thirtieth Anniversary of the Tiflis Organization," pp. 42-43.

In the first place, Comrade Makharadze declares that the "Messameh Dassy" as a whole was a genuinely revolutionary, Marxist Social-Democratic organization, thus idealizing the role and significance of the "Messameh Dassy." In the second place, he hushes up the struggle of the group that supported Lenin's *Iskra* against the majority of the "Messameh Dassy." And this despite the fact that as far back as 1904 even the Menshevik *Iskra* (the new *Iskra*) had to admit that the majority of the "Messameh Dassy" and their theoretical organ, *Kvāli*, were "legal Marxist" and opportunist in character.

This is what the Menshevik *Iskra* said about the *Kvāli* of the 'nineties:

"However, an inclination towards theoretical schemes, an abstractness, the prevalence of general ideas about the 'economic factor'—if you like, a certain lifelessness,—already characterized *Kvāli* at that time. In this respect, *Kvāli* was, to some extent, following in the footsteps of the Russian 'legal Marxists' of the early 'nineties, whose theory this newspaper reflected.'"\*

In 1898-1900 a leading, central Social-Democratic group of the Tiflis organization arose and took shape. Its membership included: Sylvester Jibladze, Al. Tsulukidze, L. Ketskhoveli,\*\* J. Stalin, S. Jugeli and leading workingmen of Tiflis like M. Bochoridze, Z. Chodrishvili and V. Sturua.

As we have already noted, Comrades Stalin, Tsulukidze, Ketskhoveli and the others were greatly assisted in the propagation of revolutionary Marxism and the formation of a Social-Democratic organization by the revolutionary Social-Democrats in Tiflis who had been exiled from Russia. Among these were Victor Kurnatovsky, Ivan Luzin, G. Franceśchi, O. Kogan, Rodzevich, M. Kalinin, S. Alliluyev, I. Levashkevich, M. Kazarenko and Anna Krassnova.

In the period of 1898-1900 the central Social-Democratic group of Tiflis did an enormous amount of revolutionary propagandist and organizational work for the formation of an illegal Social-Democratic Party organization. The members of the central Party group carried on intensive revolutionary propaganda work. All of them were in charge of workers' study circles. Comrade Stalin

\* *Iskra*, No. 60, 1904.

\*\* Laddo Ketskhoveli was murdered by tsarist thugs in Metekhy Castle in 1903.

alone conducted more than eight Social-Democratic workers' circles.\*

\* In 1896 and 1897 Comrade Stalin conducted two revolutionary, Marxist circles of students in the Tiflis Seminary.

The first revolutionary Marxist circle, called the "Senior" circle, was attended by the following students of the Tiflis Seminary: Misha Davitashvili (Davidov), Archil (Rostom) Dolidze, Gutsa Parkadze, Grigori Glurjidge, Simon Natroshvili, Guigo Razmadze, Laddo Akhmetelov and Joseph Iremashvili.

The second, "Junior" circle, as it was called, was attended by Georgi Yelisabedashvili, Alexander Svanidze, Dmitri Gurgenidze, Datiko Suliashvili, Vasso Berdzenishvili, Vanno Ketskhoveli, D. Oniashvili and others.

At the beginning of 1898 Comrade Stalin became closely associated with M. Bochoridze, Z. Chodrishvili, V. Sturua, S. Jibladze, G. Ninua and other leading workers who were organizers of circles; and in January of that year he began to conduct Social-Democratic workers' circles.

Comrade Stalin said:

"I recall 1898 when I was first given a circle of railway depot workers. That was 28 years ago. I remember how I received lessons in practical work at Comrade Sturua's house in the presence of Sylvester Jibladze (at that time he, too, was one of my teachers), Zakro Chodrishvili, Mikho Bochorishvili, Ninua and other leading workers of Tiflis." (*Zarya Vostoka* [*Dawn of the East*], June 10, 1926.)

One of these workers' circles was attended by Nikolai Macharadze, Leonti Mamaladze, Georgi Rtveladze, G. Telia and others. Another circle (of young workers) included Yegor Topikashvili, Georgi Lelashvili and F. Jatiev among others.

A third circle was attended by D. Guldedava, Pyotr Khurtsilava, K. Shengelia, N. Tomaradze, R. Sturua, Sandro Merabishvili and others.

A fourth (Russian) circle was attended by Alexei Zakomoldin, V. Razhanov, Leonti Zolotaryov, Pyotr Montin and others.

A fifth (Russian) circle was attended by Dombrovsky, Y. Kochetkov, P. Skorobogatko and others.

At the same time, in 1898, Comrade Stalin led Social-Democratic circles at the Bozarjyants and Enfianjants tobacco factories, the Karapetyants masonry works, the Adelkhanov boot and shoe works, the Mirzoyev weaving mill, the Tolle vegetable oil factory, and among the workers at small workshops, printing plants, etc.

Comrade Stalin's circle at the Bozarjyants factory was attended by Artem Litanov, Ivan Manjavidze, Sandro Bajiashvili, Grikur Mikirtumov, Shakro Mailov and Georgi Aznaurov; the latter was the organizer of all the workers' circles in the east side of Tiflis.

Comrade Stalin's circle at the Enfianjants tobacco factory was attended by Arshak Megrabyants, Vasso Mamatsashvili, Gabbo Garibov, Pogos Pilosyan and Kiknadze.

The circle at the Adelkhanov works was attended by Yegor Nozadze (Yegor Rizhi), Joseph Usinashvili, Semyon Zoidze, David Chutlashvili and Shakro Revazov.

Among the printing plant workers in the circle led by Comrade Stalin were Jamlet Salukvadze, A. Vadachkoria, V. Tsuladze, G. Chelidze and Y. Chantladze.



Besides propagating the ideas of revolutionary Social Democracy, the central Party group of Tiflis led the strikes and political struggle of the Tiflis proletariat.

In 1898 a big strike was organized for the first time in the railway depots of Tiflis, following which, up to 1900, a series of big strikes were held at the Bozarjants factory, on the horse tramway, at the Adelkhanov leather works, in printing plants, etc., as well as a number of May Day celebrations and demonstrations of Tiflis workers. Mainly through the efforts of Comrade Stalin, Ketskhoveli and the leading workers, the illegal printing of leaflets and proclamations was organized, as well as their distribution among the workers of Tiflis and a number of other districts of Transcaucasia.

In 1900, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, between four and five hundred Tiflis workers celebrated May Day (April 23, Old Style). They gathered outside the city in Salt Lake district, carrying portraits of Marx and Engels and revolutionary slogans.

At the meeting Comrade Stalin delivered a rousing speech and urged the workers to fight against the tsar and the capitalists.

Between May and July of 1900 a wave of strikes swept through the factories of Tiflis. In August 1900 a huge strike of the railway shop and depot workers took place under the leadership of Comrade Stalin. M. I. Kalinin was also active in this strike. About four thousand men downed tools.

In 1901 the Tiflis workers paraded the streets in their first public May Day demonstration. Under the guidance of Comrades Stalin and V. Kurnatovsky the leading Social-Democratic group in Tiflis carried on a tremendous amount of agitation and organizational work in preparation for this parade.

On the eve of March 22, 1901, Victor Kurnatovsky \* was ar-

\* V. Kurnatovsky spent two years in the Tiflis military prison and Metekhy Castle, and on June 9, 1903, he was exiled to the Yakutsk Region in East Siberia.

V. Kurnatovsky was the initiator and most active participant of a protest and armed resistance on the part of political exiles in 1904. For this he was sentenced to penal servitude. He served seven months and at the beginning of 1905 he escaped to Chita.

In Chita, 1905, V. Kurnatovsky was the organizer of the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Cossacks' Deputies and editor of the newspaper *Zabaikalsky Rabochy* (*Transbaikalian Worker*).

At the beginning of 1906 V. Kurnatovsky was arrested and sentenced to death. The sentence was later commuted to penal servitude for life. V. Kurnatovsky succeeded in escaping and set out first to Japan and then to Australia.

In the autumn of 1911 V. Kurnatovsky came to Paris, a sick man.

rested. That very night a search was made in the Physics Observatory where Comrade Stalin was working. The search took place in the absence of Comrade Stalin. The day after the search the Gendarmerie adopted a decision to

“... prosecute the said Joseph Jugashvili and examine the accused persons on the evidence of my investigation of the degree of political unreliability of the members of the Social-Democratic circle of intellectuals in the city of Tiflis, pursuant to the State Security Act.”\*

After the search Comrade Stalin went “underground.”

Comrade Stalin did an enormous amount of work in preparation for the May Day demonstration of the Tiflis proletariat. On his initiative the leading Party group issued a number of leaflets. One of these leaflets declared:

“The workers of the whole of Russia have decided to celebrate the First of May openly—in the best thoroughfares of the city. They have proudly declared to the authorities that Cossack whips and sabres, torture by the police and the gendarmerie hold no terrors for them.

“Then, friends, let us join our Russian comrades! Let us join hands, Georgians, Russians, Armenians; let us gather, raise the scarlet banner and celebrate our only holiday—the First of May!”\*\*

On April 22, 1901, about two thousand Tiflis factory workers demonstrated on the Soldatsky Bazaar near the former Alexander Garden in the centre of the city. The demonstrators were attacked by police and Cossacks. During the clash fourteen workers were injured and over fifty demonstrators were arrested.

Comrade Stalin took part in this demonstration and led it personally.

The workers' demonstration on the streets of Tiflis—the Caucasian stronghold of the Russian autocracy—was a major

Here V. I. Lenin devoted special attention to him, helped him with money, saw to it that he entered a hospital and had the care of the best doctors.

But he could not be saved. On September 19, 1912, V. Kurnatovsky died.

\* Archives of the Tbilisi Branch of the M.E.L.I., Folio 31, File No. 23, Vol. III, leaf 2.

\*\* Central Archive Board, Georgian S.S.R., Folio 158, File No. 355, 1901, leaf 47.

political event and had an enormous revolutionary effect on the whole Caucasus.

Concerning this demonstration Lenin's *Iskra* wrote in 1901:

"The event that took place on Sunday, April 22, in Tiflis is of historic import for the entire Caucasus: this day marks the beginning of an open revolutionary movement in the Caucasus."<sup>\*</sup>

*The political and organizational work of the central Tiflis Party group culminated with the organization in 1901 of the Tiflis Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (R.S.D.L.P.) which followed the line of Lenin's "Iskra."*

On the initiative of Comrade Stalin the first Tiflis conference of the Social-Democratic organization was held on November, 11, 1901. The twenty-five delegates at this conference represented almost all the Social-Democratic circles.

The conference elected the first Tiflis Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., consisting of nine members and several alternates. The committee included Comrades Stalin,\*\* Vasso Tsbadze, Sylvester Jibladze, Zachariah Chodrishvili, Calistrat Gogua and Severian Jugeli. (At that time Laddo Ketskhoveli was on Party work in Baku and A. Tsulukidze was under medical treatment in Batum.)

In 1900-01 Batum did not feel the influence of the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization.

Batum was an important industrial centre in 1900. The Transcaucasian Railway, between Batum and Baku, had been completed in 1883. By 1898 Batum already had over ten big industrial enterprises: the petrol container works of Rothschild, Mantashev, Nobel and others, two tobacco factories, an iron foundry, a nail works, a mineral water bottling works and several oil loading stations. In 1900 a kerosene pipe line was laid between Baku and Batum. There were altogether 11,000 workers in Batum. Their conditions were extremely difficult. The economic exploitation

\* *Iskra*, No. 6, July 1901.

\*\* A letter dated July 1, 1902, File No. 2040, from the Tiflis chief of the Gendarmerie to the assistant chief in Kutais, Batum District, says: "According to information received from our agents, in the autumn of the same year, 1901, Jugashvili was elected to the Tiflis Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, took part in two meetings of this committee and at the end of 1901 was sent to Batum for propaganda work. . . ."

of the Batum proletariat was aggravated by the vicious policy of national-colonial oppression. The working day in the factories amounted to 14 hours and, with compulsory overtime, to 16 or 17 hours. The workers' wages varied from 60 kopeks to a ruble per day.

All this aroused the Batum workers to outbursts of protest, but these were spontaneous, sporadic and unorganized.

In 1896 the Russian Social-Democrats Luzin and Franceŝchi had organized a small Social-Democratic circle in Batum, which was broken up by the tsar's police at the beginning of 1898. In 1899-1900 Karlo Chkhaidze and Isidor Ramishvili were in Batum. These two adhered to the majority of the "Messameh Dassy," advocated "legal Marxism" and denied the need for an illegal Party organization and a revolutionary political struggle on the part of the working class. They carried on legal work of a cultural and educational nature among a small group of Batum workers, mainly delivering lectures at workers' schools for general education. In other words, they practised the line of the majority of the "Messameh Dassy."

Since Batum was one of the biggest industrial and workers' centres in Transcaucasia, the Tiflis Committee tried to establish a Social-Democratic organization there, for which purpose it sent one of its members to Batum. On arriving he asked Karlo Chkhaidze and Isidor Ramishvili for their co-operation, but they refused to help him, claiming that it was impossible to carry on illegal revolutionary work under the conditions then existing in Batum.

Here are the facts of the incident:

"Before Comrade Stalin came to Batum there was no workers' Social-Democratic organization whatever. Prior to Comrade Stalin the Tiflis Committee had delegated one of its members to Batum to start a Social-Democratic circle there. He got in touch with Karlo Chkhaidze who was in Batum at that time and asked him for his co-operation, but the latter declared that in Batum everything was literally exposed to view, that there was no sense in forming any revolutionary organization, and he advised him to go back."\*

Such being the position in Batum, Comrade Stalin, on the instructions of the Tiflis Committee, left for that city at the end of November 1901. As soon as he arrived, Comrade Stalin got in

\* Tbilisi Branch of the M.E.L.I., Folio, 34, File No. 175.

touch with the leading workers, and at the end of December 1901 he succeeded in organizing Social-Democratic circles in a number of large Batum factories.

*The Batum Social-Democratic organization was formed on December 31, 1901, at a conference of circle representatives from the principal enterprises. (For purposes of secrecy the meeting was held under the guise of a New Year's party in the apartment of S. Lomjaria, a worker.)*

*At this conference Comrade Stalin delivered four or five brilliant talks on the tasks of revolutionary Social-Democracy.*

*The conference selected a leading Party group headed by Comrade Stalin. This group, supporters of Lenin's "Iskra" line, functioned as the Batum Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. After the election of the committee the work became still more intensive.*

In January and February 1902, eleven Social-Democratic workers' circles began to function actively in Batum under the leadership of Comrade Stalin. These circles were organized at the Mantashev, Rothschild and Sideridis factories and others of like importance.

At that time Sylvester Lomjaria, Kotsia Kandelaky, Illarion Darakhvelidze, Sylvester Todria, Mikhail Gabunia, Porphyry Lomjaria, Prokofy Gogiberidze, Darispan Darakhvelidze, Varlam Kalandadze, Geronty Kalandadze, Mosay Pirtskhelashvili, Theophil Gogiberidze, Khachik Kazaryan, Porphyry Kuridze, Mirian Khomeriki, Koté Kalantarov, Osman Gurgenedze, Natalia Kirtadze, Desmine Shapatava and other such leading Batum workers were members of the Batum Social-Democratic organization.

In January 1902 Comrade Stalin managed to organize a small illegal printing press. At first the press was a very primitive affair, housed in Comrade Stalin's own lodgings, but later Comrade Stalin extended and improved the printery. A press was brought from Tiflis with cases and type.

In January 1902, quite soon after he arrived, Comrade Stalin and the leading workers organized a strike at Mantashev's. This was Batum's first big strike and ended in a victory for the workers. The management was forced to make concessions, meet the demands of the workers and take back those who had been discharged.

On February 27, 1902, a strike broke out at Rothschild's over the discharge of 389 workers suspected as members of the revolutionary movement by the management and the police.

Comrade Stalin himself led the work of the strike committee, drew up the workers' demands for presentation to the factory

management, wrote leaflets and organized their printing and distribution.

The growth of the strike movement, the good organization, tenacity and exceptionally determined resistance of the workers alarmed the tsarist authorities. The military governor of Kutais arrived in Batum. He tried to stop the strikes with threats, but without effect.

On the eve of March 8 the police arrested 32 strikers.

Comrade Stalin retaliated on March 8 by organizing a mass turnout of workers demanding the release of all those arrested. The police succeeded in arresting 300 demonstrators and imprisoned them in the deportation barracks. In response to this, on the next day, March 9, Comrade Stalin organized a huge demonstration of Batum workers from the Rothschild and Mantashev factories, the docks, the railway and other enterprises, in all, over 6,000 people.

The demonstrators set out for the deportation barracks carrying red banners, singing revolutionary songs and demanding the release of those who had been arrested. At the deportation barracks the troops opened fire on the demonstration. Fifteen workers were killed and fifty-four wounded. About 500 revolutionary workers who had marched in the demonstration were arrested and exiled from Batum.

*Iskra*, No. 26, of October 15, 1902, reported the events in Batum as follows:

“The Kutais military governor, who had just arrived in Batum, called the strikers together and threatened them that all those who did not return to work would be deported to their home villages under convoy. When it was seen that the admonition had no effect, the police, acting ‘on the information of the Rothschild factory management,’ arrested 32 workers on the night of March 7, with the object of deporting them. On March 8, a crowd of 400 people appeared at police headquarters, demanding ‘the release of the arrested comrades.’ From police headquarters the crowd made its way to the prison. The assistant military governor, Colonel Dryagin, who arrived just after the crowd, called out a company of the 7th Caucasian Rifle Battalion.

“The crowd demanded that either the arrested should be freed, or that all of them should be arrested. Colonel Dryagin took the second alternative, arrested 348 people and conveyed all of them, including the 32 previously in custody, to the deportation barracks. The next morning, March 9, at nine

o'clock, an enormous crowd of workers with their leaders in front came to the deportation station, marching in regular ranks, singing, shouting and whistling. On behalf of the crowd, the workers Mikhail Khirimyantz and Theophil Gogiberidze, who were at their head, made the same demand of Colonel Dryagin, who had come out to meet them—either to release the prisoners or to arrest them all. This time the colonel answered with an order to disperse. When the crowd refused to obey his order Colonel Dryagin called out a company of the 7th Caucasian Rifle Battalion to reinforce the fort battalion detachment stationed there. When the soldiers tried to clear them out of the square the workers responded with a shower of stones. The workers tried to wrest the rifles from the soldiers and cries were heard: 'Beat 'em up, grab their rifles, they can't shoot!' Those who were imprisoned inside the barracks began to throw stones; finally they succeeded in breaking out of the prison yards, and joined the workers in the square. Then the troops opened fire, killing fourteen workers and wounding many others.'\*

During these days Comrade Stalin carried on a tremendous amount of political work, wrote proclamations and slogans, organized both the printing of this literature in the illegal printing shop and its distribution among the Batum workers; he also saw to it that the literature was sent to the neighbouring districts of Georgia (Guria, Imeretia and Mingrelia).

The leaflet written by Comrade Stalin on the Batum events of March 9, 1902, calling on the workers and peasants for a revolutionary struggle to overthrow tsarism, was particularly widely distributed.

On the day of the funeral of the victims of March 9, Stalin organized a procession which swelled into a huge political demonstration.

The events in Batum were the harbingers of a revolutionary wave that swept the whole of Transcaucasia. Their revolutionary influence on the Georgian countryside (West Georgia) was enormous.

\* On October 16, 1905, File No. 1134, Captain Jakeli, acting chief of the Kutais Provincial Gendarmerie in the Batum District, wrote to the chief of the Kutais Gendarmerie: "... On March 9 the first clash between the troops and the mob took place at the deportation station, 15 workers being killed and about 20 persons wounded."

It must be noted that the most despicable part in the shooting of the workers was played by an officer named Antadze.

It should be noted that Karlo Chkheidze and Isidor Ramishvili, who were in Batum at the time, not only took no hand in the revolutionary struggle of the Batum workers but sent their friends to Stalin time and again and came in person to urge him to leave Batum, giving as their reason that he would not be able to found an illegal Social-Democratic organization or rouse the Batum workers to a political struggle. But their main reason for doing this was their fear of trouble and persecution for themselves likely to arise from Comrade Stalin's illegal work.

Finding that their urging was in vain, I. Ramishvili and K. Chkheidze tried direct attacks, provocative, slanderous thrusts at Comrade Stalin, calling him "madcap" and "disorganizer." They even tried to dissuade individual workers from listening to Comrade Stalin, to intimidate them with statements to the effect that Comrade Stalin was putting the workers in mortal peril.

But the future Mensheviks suffered utter defeat in their efforts to disrupt the great political work of Comrade Stalin and the leading workers of Batum.

*Thus, the Batum Social-Democratic organization was established by Comrade Stalin, and he was the first to rouse the Batum workers for a revolutionary struggle against the autocracy and capitalism. Comrade Stalin, together with the leading workers of Batum, succeeded in drawing the masses of the Batum workers into the revolutionary movement.*

Here is a tsarist secret police report on Comrade Stalin's work in Batum:

"In autumn 1901 the Tiflis Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. sent one of its members, Joseph Vissarionovich Jugashvili, formerly a pupil in the sixth form of the Tiflis Seminary, to Batum for the purpose of carrying on propaganda among the factory workers. As a result of Jugashvili's activities . . . Social-Democratic organizations, headed in the beginning by the Tiflis Committee, began to spring up in all the factories of Batum. The results of the Social-Democratic propaganda could already be seen in 1902 in the prolonged strike in the Rothschild factory at Batum and in street disturbances."\*

During his work in Batum Comrade Stalin maintained close contact with the Tiflis Party organization, often visited Tiflis and directed the work of the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization.

\* Central Archives of Georgia. Report of the Assistant Chief Superintendent of the Kutais Provincial Dep't. of the Gendarmerie in the Batum Region, File No. 1011.



On April 5 (April 18), 1902, Comrade Stalin was arrested at a meeting of the leading Party group of Batum, together with the workers K. Kandelaky, D. Darakhvelidze and others, and imprisoned in the Batum jail.

While in prison Comrade Stalin managed to establish connections with the Party members outside and directed their work. At the same time he carried on a great deal of political work among the prisoners.

Comrade Stalin was confined in the Batum jail from April 5, 1902, to April 19, 1903, when he was transferred to the Kutais jail.

There, as in the Batum jail, Comrade Stalin carried on important political work among the prisoners. He made contact with all the political prisoners' cells, and spread the ideas of Lenin's *Iskra* among them. He sharply exposed the opportunism of the "Messameh Dassy" majority, *Kvaki* and Noah Jordania, and propagated the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat and the necessity of proletarian leadership in the peasant movement.

In November 1903, Comrade Stalin was transferred back to the Batum jail, from which he was exiled to Siberia (Irkutsk Province) at the end of the month.

An outstanding role in the organization of the Social-Democratic organization of Transcaucasia, which supported Lenin's *Iskra*, was played by Comrade A. (Sasha) Tsulukidze. He began the struggle against the majority of the "Messameh Dassy" before the other comrades of the minority. Comrade Tsulukidze joined the "Messameh Dassy" in 1895. He devoted his whole life to the revolutionary struggle of the working class. However, Comrade Tsulukidze was not destined to attain his fullest development since he was seriously ill with tuberculosis, which often kept him from practical revolutionary work.

Comrade Tsulukidze was one of the educated Marxists of that time, a gifted propagandist and journalist, a revolutionary who was wholly devoted to the cause of the working class, the closest friend of Comrades Stalin and L. Ketskhoveli.

Comrade Tsulukidze was the author of a number of Marxist works: "The New Type in Our Life" published in *Kvaki*, 1898; *A Conversation with Readers*, 1899; *From the History of Economic Science*, 1899; *Our Differences*, 1900; *A Dream and Reality*, 1903; *Excerpts from Political Economy*, 1904; *A Little Remark on a Big Question*, 1905; *Autonomy and the Interests of the Proletariat*, 1905, and others.

The development of Marxist views on the class struggle of the proletariat, political economy, the necessity of a political party

for the working class, the national question, etc., in Comrade Tsulukidze's writings is remarkably profound and consistent.

In 1903 Comrade Tsulukidze published the pamphlet *A Dream and Reality*, in which he severely criticized the "common ground" theory which had been advanced by the leader of the Georgian Social-Federalists, Archil Jorjadze, and the leader of the Georgian "legal Marxists," Noah Jordania.

This pamphlet completely shattered the bourgeois theory of a "common ground," exposing and proving with iron logic its bourgeois-nationalist character.

Comrade Tsulukidze proved that a common language is not sufficient grounds for the joint action of classes and parties, as Jorjadze asserted, but is a weapon in the class struggle.

"It is easy to take language for a 'common ground.' Since it is used by everyone it represents a 'common ground,' just as a battlefield does; but inasmuch as this spiritual weapon expresses a hidden social contradiction, it is a weapon of reciprocal offence. Needless to say, it is desirable that everyone should sharpen this weapon, should improve it; however, this improvement does not become a 'ground for common action,' but a weapon for the abolition of this ground. So long as the present conditions of life prevail, so long as the basic contradiction is not uprooted, language cannot serve as a 'common ground.' Only the future is preparing one great 'ground' for 'common action,' upon which all the 'foundations' will be changed and hatred and hostility eliminated."\*

Comrade Tsulukidze further wrote that the development of capitalism, of capitalist trade and industry, does not create grounds for the joint action of classes and parties, but creates a gulf between them.

"Wherever trade and industry are developed and the bourgeoisie grows strong, another social class inevitably exists, and precisely in this first period it needs the efforts of the intellectuals more than later on, when the very conditions of life, combining physical and mental labour, will produce a reliable social force which will be able to cope with even the strong. The ideologists of the bourgeoisie have always hoodwinked the public in this way, assuring the working class, 'it is in your interests to have stronger and richer merchants

\* S. Tsulukidze, *Collected Works*, "A Dream and Reality," pp. 157-8, 1927.

and industrialists, because you can be sure they will not forget you either and will carry on the common affairs of the "nation." European democracy has heard these refrains more than once. Mr. Archil Jorjadze repeats them today in our country."\*

Comrade Tsulukidze supported the Marxist thesis of class differentiation in the countryside and flatly rejected the idea of a 'common ground' for the nobility and the peasantry or even for the peasantry itself.

"In the countryside, too, we observe the economic differentiation which is the inevitable result of and condition for the development of industry. In the countryside, too, appear our Droidzes who take advantage of every new invention designed to strengthen their helpless fellow countrymen, to promote their own ends; and here, too, there has arisen and is becoming more acute that contradiction which has thrown light on the real relation and in doing so has made the 'common ground' a still more distant dream and has chanted its requiem once and for all. . . .

"The peasant bank . . . will not help the small owner in the village, will not improve his farm, will not stop the increasing economic need of the peasantry, will not do away with the economic contradiction and, consequently, will never serve as a 'common ground' either."\*\*

Comrade Tsulukidze exposed Jorjadze as a bard of capitalism and bourgeois nationalism, and, pointing out how the development of capitalism in the West was actually proceeding, he further developed the thesis that class peace and class collaboration were impossible.

"Not one of the European nations has avoided the class struggle, and not one of them has been able to keep to 'the ground of joint action' although they have had preachers who were no worse than Jorjadze. Bastia alone was worth several Jorjadzes, but even his theory of concord was not able to do away with the class struggle, and life went on, passing him by."\*\*\*

Comrade Tsulukidze explained the Marxist thesis of the aggravation of the contradictions of capitalism and the intensification of the class struggle:

\* *Ibid.*, p. 155.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 168.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 147.

“Present-day capitalist production is based on surplus value which represents unpaid labour, the labour power of the toiler appropriated gratis. Labour is the only source of value, and in order to multiply and increase the latter it is necessary to increase the former. As much labour as possible for as little pay as possible is what the owner of the instruments of production strives for. As little labour as possible for as much pay as possible is what the producer is constantly striving for. This interrelation between the two elements of society constitutes the characteristic feature of the capitalist mode of production, the essential condition of its existence; and that is why the development of trade and industry is at the same time a development of this contradiction.”\*

Comrade Tsulukidze died on June 8, 1905, at the age of 29, after a prolonged illness (tuberculosis). He was buried in Khoni on June 12, 1905. Comrade Tsulukidze's funeral, which, eye-witnesses say, was attended by over ten thousand people, turned into a huge political demonstration against the autocracy.

At the funeral Comrade Stalin made a brilliant speech in which he gave an estimation of the work of Sasha Tsulukidze, at the same time outlining the tasks and presenting a picture of the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants against the autocracy. This was a speech of great Bolshevik, revolutionary effect.

Comrade Stalin's address evoked extreme dissatisfaction among the Mensheviks, and raised the Bolsheviks' struggle against the Mensheviks throughout Georgia and Transcaucasia to a new and higher plane.

Comrade Laddo Ketskhoveli was also one of the prominent organizers of the revolutionary Social-Democracy of Lenin's *Iskra*. As we pointed out previously, Comrades Tsulukidze, Ketskhoveli and Stalin were the first to begin the struggle against the majority of the “Messameh Dassy” and their newspaper, *Kvali*. They organized and guided the Social-Democratic circles, rearranged their work along illegal lines, switched the Social-Democratic organizations over to tactics of mass political agitation, organized an illegal press, including the publication of the illegal newspaper *Brdzola* (*The Struggle*), etc.

The revolutionary activity of Comrade Laddo Ketskhoveli began in 1893 in the Tiflis Seminary from which he was expelled for participation in a students' “riot.” In order to continue his education he was compelled to move to Kiev in 1894.

\* *Ibid.*

Between 1894 and 1896 Comrade L. Ketskhoveli took an active part in the revolutionary Marxist circles of Kiev. In 1896 the police arrested him and after three months' imprisonment he was sent to his birthplace (in Georgia) under police surveillance.

Evading police persecution L. Ketskhoveli removed to Baku for illegal Party work in January 1900 on the instructions of the central Party group of Tiflis (Comrades Stalin and S. Jibladze). Comrade L. Ketskhoveli did a great deal to strengthen the Social-Democratic organization in Baku in 1900 and 1901.

The first Social-Democratic circles in Baku had originated in 1896 and 1897. Comrade Ketskhoveli put new life and strength into the Social-Democratic circles, improved the political agitation among the oil workers and railwaymen and organized the first Baku committee supporting the line advocated by Lenin's *Iskra*.

At the beginning of 1901, with the help of the leading group of the Tiflis Social-Democratic Party Comrade Ketskhoveli succeeded in organizing an illegal printing shop in Baku. On the initiative of Comrade Stalin the leading group in Tiflis supplied Comrade Ketskhoveli with type, equipment and money for this purpose.

The arrival of Comrade Ketskhoveli in Baku and the organization of an illegal printing shop there made it possible for the Tiflis Committee to publish its own illegal newspaper.

As we know, the idea of an illegal revolutionary newspaper had been proposed by Comrades Stalin and Ketskhoveli in 1898 for the purpose of spreading revolutionary Marxism and combating the majority of the Georgian "Messameh Dassy" and their legal newspaper *K'vali*.

In September 1901, in Baku, Comrade Ketskhoveli published the first issue of *Brdzola (The Struggle)*, the organ of the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization.

Extraordinary daring, energy, persistence and a great deal of work was needed to publish illegal literature. Laddo Ketskhoveli, living in the printing shop, devoted himself wholly to this work. For months Laddo toiled night and day. He regularly received articles and other material for *Brdzola* from Comrade Stalin and other members of the leading Social-Democratic group at Tiflis. Laddo himself wrote a number of the articles, simultaneously acting as editor, proofreader, typesetter and printer, and carrying out his intricate and risky work with enthusiasm.

Laddo coupled his strenuous work in the printing shop with great organizational activity. He led the Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. and guided all the Social-Democratic work in Baku,

training active workingmen revolutionaries in the spirit of Lenin's *Iskra* and rallying them round the ideas of Lenin.

All Ketskhoveri's versatile revolutionary work in Baku was guided by the leading R.S.D.L.P. group of Tiflis and Comrade Stalin. Iadko kept in constant correspondence with Comrade Stalin and for instructions and advice on vital questions he went to Comrade Stalin in Tiflis and Batum.

V. Tsuladze who worked as a compositor in the illegal Baku printing shop writes in his reminiscences:

"At that time Comrade Stalin was the best trained and most active man in the leading Party group of the Tiflis Social-Democrats. I know that he personally led the revolutionary Social-Democratic workers' circles and we activists went to him for advice and instructions on all difficult questions.

"I remember one incident where an anarchist undergraduate came to us and got the best of us in an argument; we went to Comrade Stalin for help. Comrade Stalin came to us and after a short argument literally put this anarchist to flight.

"I also remember this anarchist undergraduate meeting us angrily and abusing us for crossing him with Stalin.

"On Comrade Ketskhoveri's recommendation, some time around June 1901 I was sent to Baku for work in the illegal printing shop. When I got there I found a small, decently equipped illegal printing shop. . . .

"During its entire period of existence no one worked in the printing shop besides Comrade Ketskhoveri, myself and another compositor.

"The printing shop published four issues of *Brdzola*, the organ of the Tiflis revolutionary Social-Democratic organization, a few issues of the *Iskra* newspaper, various pamphlets such as 'The Four Brothers,' 'Spiders and Flies,' many manifestoes, leaflets, etc.'"\*

A. Yenukidze, later exposed as a mortal enemy of the people, deliberately and with hostile intent falsified the history of the Bolshevik organizations of Transcaucasia in his authorized biography and in his pamphlet *Our Illegal Printing Shops in the Caucasus*, cynically and brazenly distorted well-known historical facts, crediting himself with alleged services in the establishment of the first illegal printing shop in Baku.

\*From the Reminiscences of V. Tsuladze.

As we know, in view of the imminent danger that these fallacies and distortions of his would be exposed, A. Yenukidze was obliged to admit these "mistakes" in the columns of *Pravda* on January 16, 1935.

*Brdzola*—the first illegal newspaper of the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization, the organ of the group supporting Lenin's *Iskra*—advocated the theoretical principles of revolutionary Marxism and set forth the tasks of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat.

*Brdzola* explained and developed the idea that the Social-Democratic organizations must adopt the tactics of mass political agitation, organize a revolutionary political struggle of the working class against the autocracy; it explained and developed the Leninist idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

*Brdzola* regarded itself as the local organ of the all-Russian Social-Democratic movement, championing close ties between the revolutionary struggle of the Transcaucasian proletariat and the revolutionary struggle of the entire working class of Russia.

*Brdzola* took as its guiding principle *Iskra's* standpoint for the organization of a united revolutionary party based on widespread political agitation and propagation of revolutionary Marxism.

Lenin had written in *Iskra*:

"We Russian Social-Democrats must combine and direct all our efforts towards the formation of a strong party that will fight under the united banner of revolutionary Social-Democracy."\*

And *Brdzola* immediately set itself the task of widespread agitation and propaganda for the ideas of a revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

The very first issue of *Brdzola* announced:

"The Georgian Social-Democratic movement is not an isolated, exclusively Georgian labour movement with its own program. It goes hand in hand with the entire Russian movement and consequently subordinates itself to the Russian Social-Democratic Party. Hence, it is clear that a Georgian Social-Democratic newspaper should be only a local organ, dealing mainly with local questions and reflecting the local movement. . . .

\* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, "Declaration by the Editorial Board of *Iskra*," p. 5, Co-operative Publishing Society, Moscow, 1934.

“It stands to reason that the primary means of the movement for building up the Social-Democratic organization is widespread agitation and propagation of revolutionary ideas.”\*

*Iskra* squarely put the question of dissociation from the Economists and “legal Marxism,” stating:

“Before we can unite, and in order to unite, we must first of all firmly and definitely draw the line of demarcation.”\*\*

*Brdzola* set analogous objectives for the revolutionary struggle:

“Here we need only not forget Social-Democratic principles and revolutionary methods of struggle. If we measure every movement with such a yardstick, we shall be free from all Bernsteinian nonsense.”\*\*\*

From its very first issue *Brdzola*, unlike *Kvrali* (the organ of the Right wing of the “Messameh Dassy”), determinedly advocated and propagated the Leninist principle of the hegemony of the proletariat in the Russian revolutionary movement.

This is what *Brdzola* wrote on the hegemony of the working class:

“But let us ask what class is able to fight this enemy? Who will be the nerve centre of the revolution? It is sufficient to cast a glance at the social life of Russia, the interrelations between the classes in it, to be convinced that in Russia the united force of the revolutionary proletariat is the main force. The bourgeoisie, relying upon its inexhaustible purse, feels perfectly comfortable under the sceptre of the autocracy.

“The proletariat is the staunch force that must destroy the autocracy. The Social-Democratic Party must declare a war to the death on the autocracy; Social-Democracy, relying upon the social elements which absolutism oppresses, relying upon their direct or indirect assistance, will advance to the attack and the strong wall of Russian despotism will be razed to its foundations.”

Comrade Laddo Ketskhoveri was the tried companion-in-arms of Comrade Stalin at the dawn of Bolshevism in Transcaucasia and Georgia.

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin he gave the Baku organization its Bolshevik *Iskra* physiognomy and did a great deal of work in founding the illegal newspaper *Brdzola*.

\* *Brdzola*, “From the Editorial Board,” No. 1, September 1901.

\*\* *Iskra*, “From the Editorial Board,” No. 1.

\*\*\* *Brdzola*, No. 1.



The work of Comrade L. Ketskhoveli could not pass unnoticed. Captain Runich in a secret report on the work of Comrade Ketskhoveli, dated August 10, 1903, and addressed to the Tiflis Gendarmerie Department, wrote:

"It has been ascertained that the accused Vladimir Ketskhoveli . . . was the chief organizer of the secret printing shop which printed almost all the leaflets and other revolutionary publications circulated at various times in the districts of Tiflis, Kutais and Baku up to the time of Ketskhoveli's arrest, i.e., up to September 1902. Moreover, the same investigation disclosed that at his secret printing shop Ketskhoveli . . . together with other accused, printed proclamations to the troops *with the intent of inciting the troops to open insubordination and mutiny, which proclamations, it has been established, were very widely circulated among the troops.*

" . . . Owing to his extensive revolutionary connections and numerous acquaintances, Ketskhoveli, living under assumed names and with false passports . . . was able to organize such a complicated and hazardous undertaking as a secret printing press, which functioned for almost two years, and a section of which has not been discovered even up to the present time."\*

Comrade Ketskhoveli was arrested in Baku on September 2, 1902, after which the underground printing shop was temporarily closed.

This shop had been established on the instructions of Lenin, by Comrades L. Krassin and others, and up to November 1903, it worked for Lenin's *Iskra*.

After the Second Party Congress, when the Mensheviks gained control of *Iskra* and the Central Committee, the printing shop, on the instructions of L. Krassin, worked for the new, Menshevik *Iskra* and the Menshevik C.C.

When this printing shop was first started and thereafter, Comrades Vano Sturua, Sylvester Todria, Karaman Jashi, and others worked there.

In this period, besides the central Party printing shop, there was the Baku Committee's printing shop in Baku, which served the Baku organization.

Of this Baku Committee printing shop Comrade Georgi Sturua informs us:

\* Archives, Folio 36, File No. 467, p. 59, cf. Material on Ketskhoveli at the Shaumyan Institute, pp. 111-12.

“By decision of the Baku Committee I was instructed to take up the work of organizing an illegal printing shop. In view of the fact that the illegal Baku printing shop had been raided and that the Baku Committee had decided to set one up again . . . a small illegal printing shop was established, where various leaflets of the Baku Committee were printed. . . .

“Later on, when this printing shop was enlarged, two workers were transferred from the central illegal printing shop, which was then in Baku, to the Baku Committee.”\*

Comrade Ketskhoveli was confined for about a year, first in the Baku prison and after that in a Tiflis prison (Metekhy).

In prison Comrade Ketskhoveli stood his ground like a real proletarian revolutionary, denounced the police thugs and carried on agitation among the prisoners against the autocratic tsarist regime.

The police resorted to the vilest method of reprisal against this sterling revolutionary fighter. On August 10, 1903, exactly seven days before the murder of Comrade Ketskhoveli, Captain Runich, a prison police hound, wrote to the Tiflis Gendarmerie Department:

“It would be useful . . . in view of Ketskhoveli’s consequence and importance in the revolutionary movement, as proved by the investigation, that while he is on his way to exile *some sort of special measures* should be taken against Ketskhoveli, because once at large Ketskhoveli will escape abroad at the first opportunity and in the future *will certainly cause a lot of mischief by virtue of his extremely radical convictions.*”\*\*

These “special measures” materialized on August 17, when Ketskhoveli was shot dead in his prison cell.

The Tiflis Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. issued the following proclamation on the foul murder of Ketskhoveli:

“Comrades! On Sunday at 9.30 in the morning Laddo Ketskhoveli, untiring fighter for freedom and socialism, was shot dead in the Metekhy prison. From his early years till his last breath he untiringly defended the sacred rights of man and protested against all acts of violence and despotism. . . .

“In 1893, while still a young student, he took an active part in disturbances at the seminary, for which he was expelled. After that he studied in a seminary at Kiev where, however,

\* From the Reminiscences of Georgi Sturua.

\*\* Archives, Folio 36, File 467, p. 59.

he was imprisoned twice. From 1897 on he took an active part in the labour movement in the Caucasus. In Tiflis he organized the first strike of the employees of the horse-tramway. . . . It was he who first organized the publication of *Brdzola*.

"We dip our banners to you, fearless champion of the people's freedom!

"Comrades! This foul, ghastly murder must not go unprotected. Let us, like Laddo, raise the mighty cry:

*"Down with the Autocracy!"*

*"Long Live the Democratic Republic!"*

*"Down with Capitalism!"*

*"Long Live Socialism!"*

"The Tiflis Committee."

In 1903 the All-Caucasian Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Party issued a pamphlet, *On the Life and Revolutionary Activity of Laddo Ketskhoveli*.

"Laddo," it said, "was the *first* to create a Georgian revolutionary literature. He was *first* to organize a revolutionary printing press here, the *first* to issue a Georgian revolutionary periodical, the *first* to sow the seeds of revolution among the Baku workers. . . . It is clear that Laddo was a most deadly enemy of the autocratic vultures and of all tyrants. They understood this very well and that is just why they killed him so basely, so vilely, so treacherously."

Such was the All-Caucasian Committee's opinion of Comrade Ketskhoveli and his role in the revolutionary movement in Transcaucasia.

Thus:

1) *The first seeds of Marxism were brought to Transcaucasia in the early 'nineties, on the one hand, by Russian revolutionary Social-Democrats exiled from the central regions of Russia, and, on the other, by the Georgian "legal Marxists" who had lived abroad.*

2) *The "Messameh Dassy" was the first Georgian Marxist, Social-Democratic organization; it played a definite, positive role (in the period of 1893-98) in the dissemination of the ideas of Marxism, and also in the struggle against the openly chauvinist tendencies of the Georgian nobility and bourgeois intelligentsia.*

3) *The "Messameh Dassy," however, was not a homogeneous organization. The majority of the "Messameh Dassy," headed by N. Jordania, represented an opportunist trend—"legal Marxism"—which vulgarized and distorted the principles of revolutionary Marx-*

ism, denying as it did the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement, the political revolutionary struggle of the working class against the autocracy, and the idea of proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The majority of the "Messameh Dassy" vulgarized the teachings of Marxism and adapted them to the interests of bourgeois-capitalist development and bourgeois nationalism.

4) The minority of the "Messameh Dassy," headed by Comrades Stalin, Ketskhoveri and A. Tsulukidze, represented the revolutionary-Marxist, internationalist wing of the "Messameh Dassy," which organized an uncompromising struggle against the majority of the "Messameh Dassy" for the principles of Lenin's "Iskra."

The minority of the "Messameh Dassy," headed by Comrade Stalin and the others, combating all distortions of revolutionary Marxism, propagated and fought for the principles of revolutionary Marxism. This minority was the nucleus of that trend in the R.S.D.L.P. in Transcaucasia which supported Lenin's "Iskra."

5) After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., especially towards the end of 1904 after the news of Plekhanov's desertion to Menshevism had reached Transcaucasia, the differences of opinion and the strife between the majority and the minority of the "Messameh Dassy" intensified and became general differences of opinion on the question of Bolshevism and Menshevism. The majority of the "Messameh Dassy," headed by N. Jordania, adhered en bloc to the position of Menshevism, while the minority, headed by Comrade Stalin, adopted Lenin's position, the position of Bolshevism. (Loud applause.)

Towards the close of 1904 a Bolshevik organization of the R.S.D.L.P. was formed in Tiflis.

6) The founder of the Social-Democratic organization in Georgia and Transcaucasia supporting Lenin's "Iskra" was Comrade Stalin (applause) together with Comrades S. Tsulukidze and Laddo Ketskhoveri, and the Russian Social-Democrats who were in Tiflis (Kurnatovsky and others).

It was under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, in a relentless struggle against the enemies of Marxism and Leninism, primarily in the struggle against the Georgian "legal Marxists" (the majority of the "Messameh Dassy," headed by N. Jordania, S. Jibladze and others), that the Bolshevik organizations in Georgia and Transcaucasia originated and developed. (Loud applause.)

## II

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### ***On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations of Transcaucasia in the Period of the First Russian Revolution (1905-1907)***

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Comrade Stalin returned to Tiflis in February 1904 after his escape from exile in Siberia. He took his place at the head of the Bolshevik organizations of Transcaucasia, organizing and directing the struggle against the Mensheviks, who had become especially active after the Second Party Congress, during his absence.

Comrade Stalin and the other Transcaucasian Bolsheviks fought for the convocation of the Third Party Congress, firmly pursuing the line of a split, a rupture with the Mensheviks. Under his leadership the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. severed connections with the C. C. of the R.S.D.L.P., which had fallen into the hands of the Mensheviks after the Second Congress, and demanded that the Third Party Congress be called.

In November 1904 a conference of Caucasian Bolshevik committees (attended by 15 delegates) was held in Tiflis. This conference adopted a decision to organize a widespread agitation campaign and a struggle for the convocation of the Third Congress.

The decision of the conference said:

“Throughout the entire post-congress period the Party has been hindered from serving the proletariat of Russia to any extent satisfactorily by the Party crisis which arose immediately after the Second Congress because the so-called ‘minority’ did not want to observe Party discipline.

“For the reasons mentioned above, there are no grounds whatever for hoping that our central organizations will lead the Party out of such a difficult situation through their own efforts. . . . If anyone can do it, it is only the Party itself by means of a congress. Only the legitimate means of a Party congress can restore to the centres the lost confidence that is necessary to render them capable of action.

“The immediate convocation of a special congress, essential in the interests of peace within the Party, is extremely neces-

sary also because of the conditions of the present historical moment, which requires *exceptional* unanimity and unity of action on the part of the individual sections of the Party for a decisive onslaught against the tsarist autocracy.”

The November Conference of Caucasian Committees elected a bureau to organize the fight for the convocation of the Third Congress.

During the period of the revolution (1905-07) Comrade Stalin, together with Mikha Tskhakaya, directed the work of the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. In this period, besides Comrade Stalin and Mikha Tskhakaya, the following comrades among others were at various times members of the Committee: A. Tsulukidze, St. Shaumyan, A. Japaridze, B. Knuniyants, Ph. Makharadze, M. Bochoridze, M. Davitashvili and N. Alajarova.

The All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. launched an offensive against the Mensheviks, demanding that all local Social-Democratic organizations undeviatingly carry out the tactical and organizational principles of Bolshevism.

In June 1904 the All-Caucasian Committee dissolved the Menshevik Baku Committee, which opposed the calling of the Third Party Congress, and organized a new, Bolshevik Baku Committee.

Comrade Stalin arrived in Baku in June 1904 on the instructions of the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.

Comrade Stalin directed the struggle of the Baku Bolsheviks, speaking at a number of meetings of the *active* of the Baku Social-Democratic organization, at which he exposed the Mensheviks and the Shendrikovites.<sup>3</sup>

The Tiflis Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., headed by S. Jibladze and N. Ramishvili, evaded carrying out the Bolshevik instructions of the All-Caucasian Committee, and on January 17, 1905, adopted a decision to leave the Caucasian Union of the R.S.D.L.P. The All-Caucasian Committee then decided to dissolve the Menshevik Committee and organized a Bolshevik Tiflis Party Committee.

On February 4, 1905, the All-Caucasian Committee, in connection with its decision to dissolve the Tiflis Committee, issued the following special circular to the members of the Tiflis organization of the R.S.D.L.P.:

“The Central body of the Caucasian union, the All-Caucasian Committee, has adopted the following decision regarding the withdrawal of the Tiflis Committee from the union: Such behaviour on the part of the Tiflis Committee (withdrawal from the union) violates the Party principles laid down by the Sec-

ond Congress and the rules of the union, thus placing the present members of the Tiflis Committee outside the Party; therefore the All-Caucasian Committee is setting up a new Tiflis Committee, which will be the authentic representative of the Party in Tiflis, and which together with the other Caucasian comrades will lead us in the struggle against the government and the bourgeoisie.”\*

In 1904-05, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks waged a struggle to expose Menshevism and win over the masses of the workers.

In January 1904 the Russo-Japanese War broke out. The Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia, headed by Comrade Stalin, consistently pursued Lenin's line of “defeat” for the tsarist government, constantly urging the workers and peasants to take advantage of the military embarrassments of tsarism and to fight for the revolutionary overthrow of the autocracy.

The All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., the Tiflis and Baku Committees of the R.S.D.L.P. issued a number of leaflets exposing the imperialist, predatory character of the Russo-Japanese War on the part of both warring powers and calling for the defeat of tsarism.

One of the leaflets of the Tiflis Committee of the Caucasian union of the R.S.D.L.P., entitled “Comrades!” said:

“However much they call us ‘non-patriots,’ and ‘the enemies at home,’ let the autocracy and its accomplices remember that the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is the representative of 99 per cent of the population of Russia, whose sweat and blood created the treasury, created the entire wealth of the state, culture, civilization, science and literature! Their confrères are being driven into the jaws of death to shed the blood of the sons of the Japanese, a brother people! Russia (like the whole world) is our country, but you are our enemies, vampires, lackeys of the autocracy, its pillars and zealots! The Japanese workingman, or the worker of any other tribe or nation is our brother who groans under the yoke of labour just as we do! But the time will come—and it is not so far off now—the dawn has long revealed its beaming face to us—the awakened proletariat will sweep over the globe and deliver the battle cry of its creed in menacing tones: ‘Workers of the World, Unite!’ will overthrow the modern bourgeois order and establish on its

\* From the Circular of the All-Caucasian Committee, February 4, 1905, “To the United Workers of Tiflis.”

ruins the socialist order where there will be no slaughter of the peoples, no war, militarism or 'police patriotism'! So let us too awaken, comrades, awaken and act! Time does not wait! We will neither be hoodwinked nor intimidated by the people's hangman, Nicholas II, or his ministers, or this Caucasian tyrant of ours—Golitsyn! We want this war to be more lamentable for the Russian autocracy than was the Crimean War. . . . Then it was serfdom that fell, now, as a result of this war, we will bury the child of serfdom—the autocracy with its foul secret police and gendarmes! This is what we want, and we will act, comrades!

*“Long live the labouring people of the whole world—the proletariat!”*

*“Down with war, down with militarism!”*

Day in and day out the Bolsheviks urged the soldiers to support the revolutionary struggle of the people against tsarism.

The appeals and proclamations of the Bolshevik committees called on the soldiers to come over to the side of the workers and peasants and to turn their weapons against the tsar and the landed gentry.

In another proclamation, entitled “Brother Soldiers,” the Tiflis Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. said:

“But to hasten the happy hour of the downfall of the people's enemy, all honest people, all those in the bonds of the Russian autocracy are in duty bound to espouse the proletariat's great struggle for emancipation. And you, soldiers and brothers, more than anyone else, are in duty bound to unite with the workers in the struggle against the tsarist autocracy. If you lack the audacity to come over to the side of the workers openly right now and to turn your weapons against our common enemy—the bloody autocracy—the least you can do is to refuse to fire on your brothers, the workers. After all you are workers too, only in military uniform for a time! You can be sure, brothers, if we free ourselves, you too will be free. You are the only hope, the only support of the long since tottering tsarist autocracy, which is stained with the people's blood. And so, if you will not support it any longer, it will crumble into dust.”

The defeat of tsarism in the Russo-Japanese War inflamed the class contradictions to a white heat and stimulated the growth of the revolutionary and oppositionary movement throughout Russia.



Under the influence of the liberal movement of the Russian *Zemstvo* members, the liberal bourgeois and aristocratic groups in Transcaucasia organized a banquet campaign.\*

At the end of 1904 banquets were held in Tiflis, Baku, Kutais, Sukhum and other towns. At these banquets the liberal bourgeoisie tried to proclaim their demands for constitutional "rights," without dreaming of trespassing beyond the law.

The liberals advanced the slogan: "All classes, unite! There must be no parties here!"

The Transcaucasian Mensheviks advised the workers to take part in the liberals' banquets and to speak there indicating their support of the constitutional demands of the liberals.

In 1905, the Transcaucasian Mensheviks favoured participation in the "Assembly of Estate Representatives" which the vice-regent of the Caucasus, Vorontsov-Dashkov, intended to call.

Comrade Stalin and the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia exposed the Menshevik plan for a *Zemstvo* campaign, calling on the working class to engage in an open revolutionary struggle against the autocracy.

A proclamation of the Tiflis Committee of the Caucasian union of the R.S.D.L.P. on the banquet campaign of the Tiflis liberals, entitled "The Public Has Expressed its Opinion," stated the following:

"The liberal bourgeoisie is dissatisfied with the autocracy, but it needs the autocracy for the purpose of suppressing the working class. . . .

"We have been fighting and shedding our blood for political freedom, while the cowardly liberals have been skulking in corners. . . .

"Our motto: 'Down with the autocracy!' must become our present demand. By meetings and demonstrations we must show that to this day we are in our" (*i.e.*, the foremost) "place. Not the cowardly word of the liberals, but our straightforward and bold word must echo throughout Russia.

"It is not the liberals but we who must give the tone to the whole revolutionary movement. We must demand a democratic republic with universal suffrage, we must fight both against the autocracy and against the bourgeoisie. So—

"*Down with the Autocracy!*

"*Long Live the Democratic Republic!*

\* Bourgeois political meetings held in the guise of banquets.—  
*Ed. Eng. ed.*

*"Long Live Universal and Equal Suffrage!  
"Down with Capitalism!  
"Long live Socialism!"*

In all the industrial districts of Transcaucasia—Baku, Tiflis, Kutais, Chiaturi, Samtredi, Poti, etc.—the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks launched a great ideological and organizational struggle against Menshevism; while exposing opportunism and the treacherous role of the Mensheviks in the revolution, the Bolsheviks built up and strengthened their own Party organizations.

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. conducted a series of debates with the Mensheviks in a number of cities and districts.

Big discussion meetings were held in Tiflis among the Social-Democratic workers of the railway shops and depots, the Adelkhanov factory, the tobacco factories, etc. Comrade Stalin spoke at these debates, exposing the Menshevik leaders—Noah Jordania, I. Tsereteli, N. Ramishvili and the others.

In Batum there was also a big debate, at which Comrade Stalin spoke against N. Ramishvili, R. Arsenidze and other Menshevik chieftains.

A number of debates were held at various times in Chiaturi and at almost all the manganese mines (Perevissi, Shukurty and others). Comrade Stalin spoke at these debates on behalf of the Bolsheviks, and with him at various times A. Tsulukidze, S. Iuts-kirveli and other comrades. The Menshevik leaders G. Lordkipanidze, N. Khomeriki, K. Ninidze, Z. Guruli and others spoke on behalf of the Mensheviks.

In the Chiaturi debates the Mensheviks were utterly defeated. The overwhelming majority of the Social-Democratic workers sided with the Bolsheviks.

In Chiaturi Comrade Stalin organized a Bolshevik Party Committee of the county, selected a group of propagandists from the foremost worker activists and trained a special group of activists for work among the peasants of the Chiaturi district.

Debates were held in Kutais, where the Mensheviks G. Lordkipanidze, N. Khomeriki, K. Sulakvelidze and others managed to win over the majority of the Social-Democratic organizations.

On the initiative of Comrade Stalin, the Imeretino-Mingrel Bolshevik Committee was formed in Kutais, which directed the Party organizations of the former Kutais Province. Comrade Stalin organized a group of propagandists under the Kutais Committee and trained them for Party agitational work.

Comrade Stalin, together with Mikha Tskhakaya, Ph. Makharadze and others, held a number of debates with the Mensheviks in the Khoni district (Khoni, Kukhi). After these debates a Bolshevik Committee was formed at Khoni.

Comrade Stalin organized a debate in Poti too and formed a Bolshevik organization there.

The Mensheviks, headed by N. Jordania and N. Ramishvili among others, resorted to malicious insinuations and demagoguery against the Bolsheviks, slanderously accusing them, particularly Lenin and Stalin, of "Blanquism," of "Jacobinism," of "acting like dictators," etc.

In November 1904 Comrade Stalin left for Baku to intensify the campaign for the convocation of the Third Party Congress and further develop the struggle against the Mensheviks, particularly against the representative of the Menshevik Central Committee, Glebov (Noskov), who was then in Baku.

Comrade Stalin and the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks ruthlessly attacked the nationalist parties: the Dashnaks,<sup>4</sup> Federalists,<sup>5</sup> Anarchists and others. A number of big debates were held with the Anarchists, Federalists and others.

There was a big debate in Tiflis with K. Gogelia and M. Tsereteli, Kropotkin Anarchists, ending in complete victory for the Bolsheviks. Another big debate was held in Chiaturi. Here the Bolsheviks opposed S. Meskhishvili (Socialist-Revolutionary), S. Mdivani (Federalist), Gogelia, a leader of the Anarchists, and others. In all these debates Comrade Stalin played an outstanding part.

Comrade Kekelidze recalls the Chiaturi debate in the following words:

"In May 1905 a meeting was called, which turned into a debate before an audience of about 2,000 workers. Comrade Koba-Stalin spoke. Among the other speakers were G. Lordkipanidze, on behalf of the Mensheviks; S. Meskhishvili, on behalf of the Socialist-Revolutionaries; S. Mdivani, on behalf of the Federalists; K. Gogelia, on behalf of the Anarchists. The meeting opens. Koba speaks first. A long debate ensues. . . . Whereas each of his opponents stormed and raved, Comrade Koba calmly but firmly shattered and demolished all their arguments. So, here too, the Bolsheviks were victorious: the workers supported Comrade Koba unanimously.'"\*

\* From the Reminiscences of Batlomé Kekelidze.

*During the first revolution (1905-07) Comrade Stalin firmly carried out Lenin's line; he was the guide and leader of the Bolsheviks and the revolutionary workers and peasants of Transcaucasia.* (Loud applause.)

In Transcaucasia the Revolution of 1905, like the entire revolutionary movement, arose under the immediate influence of the revolutionary movement of the Russian proletariat.

In 1905 the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants of Transcaucasia against the autocracy spread far and wide.

In December 1904, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, there was a huge strike of the Baku workers, which lasted from December 13 to December 31 and ended with the conclusion of a collective agreement with the oil magnates, the first collective agreement in the history of the Russian labour movement.

The Baku strike was the beginning of the revolutionary upsurge in Transcaucasia. It served as the "signal for the glorious actions of January and February throughout Russia." (*Stalin.*)

The events of January 9 in St. Petersburg stimulated a further development of the revolutionary movement. Political strikes spread throughout Transcaucasia.

On January 18, a general strike of the Tiflis proletariat took place, ushering in a period of general strikes in Batum, Chiaturi, Kutais, Samtredi and other towns.

According to official statistics, *in 1905 each worker in Baku went on strike 4.56 times, and each worker in Tiflis 4.49 times.* Under the leadership of the Bolshevik organizations, the strikes usually developed into armed demonstrations, and armed clashes with the police and the troops.

The revolutionary upsurge in the Transcaucasian countryside was particularly marked.

In a number of districts in Georgia (Ozurget, Zugdidi, Senaki, Gori, Dushet, Tiflis and Telav counties), and particularly in Guria (Ozurget county), big uprisings of armed peasants took place. Peasant Revolutionary Committees—the organs of armed insurrection of the revolutionary peasantry—seized the landowners' estates, abolished all taxes and boycotted the landowners, the clergy and the government institutions.

The magnitude with which the first Russian revolution developed in Transcaucasia, immediately turning into a popular armed insurrection against tsarism, was due to the desperate economic and political situation of the workers and peasants and the barbarous national-colonial oppression of the peoples of Transcaucasia.

White terror was already raging in Transcaucasia on the eve

of the 1905 Revolution. The usual methods of the tsarist local government were arrests, exiles, floggings, bayonet attacks and the knout.

There were more survivals of serfdom in the Transcaucasian countryside than in the central regions of Russia. The peasants' acute lack of land, the vicious exploitation on the part of the landowners and nobles, the piratical tax policy and the club-law of tsarism, and the penetration of loan capital into the villages placed the peasantry of Transcaucasia in a position of dire distress and helped to revolutionize them.

The leading, guiding force of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants in Transcaucasia was the Bolshevik organization, headed by Comrade Stalin, the truest and most loyal comrade-in-arms of Lenin.

From the very outset of the revolution the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia succeeded in isolating the Menshevik, Dashnak and Federalist petty-bourgeois parties from the masses and led the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry in the struggle against tsarism and the bourgeoisie for the complete victory of the revolution.

The revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants of Transcaucasia, led by Comrade Stalin, met with warm support, guidance and assistance from Lenin, the Russian working class and the Bolshevik Party.

There was a special discussion on the revolution in the Caucasus at the Third Congress of our Party.

On the proposal of Lenin, the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. greeted the beginning of the armed struggle of the masses against tsarism and called on the workers of Russia to give their whole-hearted support to the revolution in the Caucasus.

A resolution of the Third Congress said:

"On behalf of the class-conscious proletariat of Russia the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. sends warm greetings to the heroic proletariat and peasantry of the Caucasus and instructs the Central and local committees of the Party to adopt the most energetic measures to spread information on the state of affairs in the Caucasus to the utmost by means of pamphlets, meetings, workers' gatherings, circle talks, etc., and also to give timely support to the Caucasus with every available means."\*

\* *The C.P.S.U.(B.) in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Meetings of the C.C.*, Part 1, p. 50, Russ. ed.

In his article on the armed struggle in the Caucasus, "The Present Situation in Russia and the Tactics of the Workers' Party," Lenin wrote:

"In this respect we have been left behind by the Caucasus and Poland and the Baltic Region, *i.e.*, precisely those centres where the movement had progressed farthest beyond the old terrorist methods, where the uprising was best prepared, where the mass character of the proletarian struggle was most forcibly and clearly evidenced."\*

In the period of 1904-07 Comrade Stalin, at the head of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks, did a tremendous amount of theoretical and organizational work. He led and directed the struggle of the whole Bolshevik press.

During that time the following Bolshevik newspapers were issued in Transcaucasia: in Tiflis—*Borba Proletariata* (*The Struggle of the Proletariat*) and *Listok Borby Proletariata* (*The Struggle of the Proletariat*), in Georgian, Russian and Armenian; *Kavkazky Rabochy Listok* (*Caucasian Workers' Newssheet*), *Akhali Droyeba* (*The New Times*), *Dro* (*The Times*), *Akhali Tskhovreba* (*The New Life*), *Chveni Tskhovreba* (*Our Life*); in Baku—*Bakinsky Rabochy* (*The Baku Worker*), *Bakinsky Proletary* (*The Baku Proletarian*), *Gudok* (*The Siren*), *Kantz* (*The Spark*, in Armenian), *Nor-khosk* (*The New Word*, in Armenian), *Banvori Dzain* (*The Worker's Voice*, in Armenian), *Ryadovoi* (*The Rank and File*), *Kochdevet* (*The Call*, in Tyurkic and Armenian), and others.\*\*

\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. IX, "The Present Situation in Russia and the Tactics of the Labour Party," p. 27, Russ. ed.

\*\* *Proletariatis Brdzola* (*The Struggle of the Proletariat—Proletariatis Kriv*, in Armenian)—an organ of the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., published from 1903 to 1905 under the direction of Comrades Stalin, A. Tsulukidze and S. Shaumyan, in Georgian, Russian and Armenian. There were twelve issues in all.

The newspaper published a number of unsigned leading articles by Comrade Stalin.

It was printed in the illegal Avlabar printing shop of the All-Caucasian Committee.

*Proletariatis Brdzolis Putseli* (*Listok Borby Proletariata—Proletariatis Kriv Tertik*)—an organ of the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. The newspaper came out under the direction of Comrade Stalin from 1903 to 1905, in Georgian, Russian and Armenian.

The newspaper published a number of unsigned leading articles by Comrade Stalin.

*Kavkazky Rabochy Listok* (*Caucasian Workers' Newssheet*)—a legal organ of the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. The newspaper

*In his writings Comrade Stalin made war on the Mensheviks, defended, substantiated and propagated Lenin's teaching on the proletarian party and the organizational principles of Bolshevism.*

was published in Tiflis under the direction of Comrade Stalin, in Russian, from November 20 to December 11, 1905. There were fifteen issues.

After the Tiflis Governor-General closed it down because it called for a general strike, the newspaper came out on December 16 and 17 under the title of *Yelizavetpolsky Vestnik (Elizabethpol Herald)*. After the second issue the paper was again suppressed.

The newspaper published a number of unsigned leading articles by Comrade Stalin.

*Akhali Droyeba (The New Times)*—a Bolshevik weekly published in Georgian at Tiflis from November 14, 1906, to January 8, 1907. Seven issues appeared in 1906 and two in 1907. The paper was suppressed by order of the Tiflis Governor-General.

It published a number of leading articles by Comrade Stalin (under the pseudonym "Ko").

*Dro (The Times)*—a Bolshevik daily, published in Georgian at Tiflis from March 11 to April 15, 1907.

The paper published a number of leading articles by Comrade Stalin (under the pseudonym "Ko").

*A'khali Tskhovreba (The New Life)*—A Bolshevik daily published in Georgian under the direction of Comrade Stalin at Tiflis from June 20 to July 14, 1906. Twenty issues came out. It was suppressed by order of the Tiflis Governor-General.

The paper published a number of leading articles by Comrade Stalin (under the pseudonym "Koba").

*Chveni Tskhovreba (Our Life)*—a Bolshevik daily published in Georgian at Tiflis from February 18 to March 7, 1907. Thirteen issues came out. The paper published a number of leading articles by Comrade Stalin (under the pseudonyms "Ko" and "Koba").

*Bak. nskv. Rabochy (The Baku Worker)*—a Bolshevik newspaper, organ of the Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. The first issue came out in April 1906.

In 1908 publication was resumed under the direction of Comrade Stalin. On September 6 the first legal issue appeared. On October 31 of the same year the paper was suppressed because of its "dangerous tendencies."

No. 1 and 2 of the *Bakinsky Rabochy*, 1908, published a number of unsigned leading articles by Comrade Stalin.

The *Bakinsky Rabochy* resumed publication as a Bolshevik newspaper on April 22, 1917, and at the present time is the organ of the Central Committee and the Baku Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan.

*Bakinsky Proletary (The Baku Proletarian)*—a Bolshevik paper, organ of the Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. The first issue was published on June 20, 1907.

The newspaper published a number of leading articles by Comrade Stalin (under the pseudonyms "Koba," "Koba Ivanovich," "K. Ko," "Ko," "K." and "S.").

*Gudok (The Siren)*—a mass workers' newspaper, organ of the Baku Oil Workers' Union. It was founded on the initiative of Comrade Stalin.

In the pamphlet *A Glance at Party Disagreements*, written at the beginning of 1905 and published illegally in the summer of the same year, and in the article "Answer to a Social-Democrat," which appeared in the newspaper *Proletariat's Brdzola*, Comrade Stalin subjected the Menshevik opportunist theory of spontaneity to devastating criticism, and explained the Marxist-Leninist teaching of the importance of revolutionary theory and a political party for the working class. In these publications Comrade Stalin came out in support of Lenin's "What Is to Be Done?" He wrote:

"A spontaneous labour movement, a movement without socialism inevitably becomes petty and takes on a craft-unionist complexion, subordinates itself to bourgeois ideology.

"But may the conclusion be drawn from this that socialism is everything and the labour movement nothing? Certainly not! Only idealists can claim this. Ultimately, economic development will surely lead the working class to the social revolution and liberate it from bourgeois ideology, but the point is that it is a path of zigzags and digressions.

"On the other hand, socialism outside the labour movement remains a phrase and loses its meaning, no matter on what scientific grounds it stands. But may it be concluded from this that the labour movement is everything and socialism nothing? Not in the least. The only people who can think so are those quasi-Marxists for whom an idea loses all meaning and has no meaning just because it has been worked out by life. But socialism can be introduced into the labour movement and transformed from an empty phrase into a powerful weapon.

"What is the conclusion? The labour movement must unite

The first issue appeared on August 12, 1907. Its contributors included A. Japaridze, S. Shaumyan, Sergo Orjonikidze, S. Spandaryan (Timofoi) and A. Stopani. The official editor was S. Samartsev.

The paper published a number of leading articles by Comrade Stalin (under the pseudonyms "K. Kato" and "Ko").

*Kantz (The Spark)*—a Bolshevik newspaper, published in Armenian in 1906. It appeared every other day. Forty-seven issues came out.

*Nor-khosk (The New Word)*—a Bolshevik newspaper, published in Armenian from August 18, 1906. There were fourteen issues in all.

*Banvori Dzain (The Worker's Voice)*—a Bolshevik newspaper published in Armenian in 1906.

*Ryadovoi (The Rank and File)*—an illegal organ of the Baku Bolshevik organization of military men for carrying on propaganda in the army and navy. It was published in Russian in 1906 and 1907.

*Kochdevet (The Call)*—a Bolshevik newspaper, published in Baku, in Armenian and Tyurkie, beginning with May 26, 1906. Altogether nineteen issues appeared. It was suppressed by order of the Baku Governor-General because of its "dangerous tendencies."



with socialism; practical activity must be closely bound up with theory, and so give the spontaneous labour movement a Social-Democratic meaning and character. . . .’’\*

In the same pamphlet Comrade Stalin explained the leading role of revolutionary Social-Democracy:

“We Social-Democrats must prevent the spontaneous labour movement from following the course of craft unionism. We must divert it into a Social-Democratic channel, *introduce* socialist consciousness into this movement, and consolidate the advanced forces of the working class in a centralized party. Our duty is always and everywhere to lead the movement, energetically to combat everyone—be he ‘friend’ or foe—who obstructs the realization of our sacred aim.’’\*\*

In an article “They Began with a Toast and Ended with a Requiem,” Comrade Stalin exposed the disorganizing and undermining activities of the Mensheviks, the unprincipledness of their intriguing attacks against the Second Congress of the Party.

In this article written in 1905, Comrade Stalin pointed out that in essence the Mensheviks were already moving along the road to Liquidationism.

Comrade Stalin wrote:

“In a word, if the Second Congress was non-Party and illegal, then the Program drawn up by it must unquestionably be non-Party and illegal as well. You Mensheviks, however, deny the legality of the Congress and recognize the Program as legal? Truly ridiculous! . . . This ridiculous contradiction, it seems, is felt by the ‘Mensheviks’ themselves, who try to extricate themselves somehow. But how? They can do this in one of two ways: either they must acknowledge that the Congress is legal, or they must acknowledge that the Program is also illegal and reject it. It appears that they have chosen the second way—rejection of the Program. But in order to reject the Program to which they clung so tenaciously till now, they must first prove its insignificance. And so the ‘Mensheviks’ have already set themselves to this formidable task. . . . To begin with, they minimized the importance of a program: we can manage, they said, without a definite program, too; then, after a while, they began to talk about its insignificance;

\* Stalin, *A Glance at Party Disagreements*, pp. 15-16, 1905, Russ. ed.  
\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 16.

some time will pass and they will undoubtedly declare that a program is altogether unnecessary.”\*

The following editorial comment on this article appeared in the central organ of the Party, *Proletarii*, which was under the editorship of Lenin:

“The article “They Began with a Toast and Ended with a Requiem” exposed all the vacillation and lack of principle of the Party politics of the minority from the Second Congress to the present time.”\*\*

The newspaper *Proletariatis Brdzola*, which was guided by Comrade Stalin and appeared in the Georgian, Russian and Armenian languages, was the militant organ of the Bolshevik Party.

Lenin attributed enormous importance to the publication of this paper.

The Editorial Board of the central organ of the Party, *Proletarii*, wrote as follows concerning the appearance of the first numbers of *Proletariatis Brdzola*:

“We heartily greet the extension of the publishing activity of the Caucasian Federation and wish it further successes in the establishment of the Party spirit in the Caucasus.”\*\*\*

In his article “Answer to a Social-Democrat” (in *Proletariatis Brdzola*, No. 11, August 15, 1905), *Comrade Stalin developed Lenin’s thesis concerning the introduction of socialist consciousness into the spontaneous labour movement, the thesis that revolutionary theory must be combined with the mass labour movement.*

“Present-day life is ordered capitalistically. Two big classes exist here: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and a life and death struggle is going on between them. The first class is compelled by its position in life to strengthen the capitalist order. As for the second class, it is compelled by its position to undermine and abolish the capitalist order. Corresponding to these two classes, two kinds of consciousness arise: a bourgeois and a socialist consciousness. The socialist consciousness corresponds to the position of the proletariat. . . .

“But what meaning has mere socialist consciousness if it is not disseminated among the proletariat? It will remain an empty phrase and nothing more. Matters will take an entirely different turn if this consciousness spreads among the

\* *Proletariatis Brdzola*, No. 11, August 15, 1905.

\*\* *Proletarii*, No. 22, 1905.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*, No. 12, 1905.

proletariat: the proletariat will realize its position and will press on towards a socialist life at a more *rapid* pace. This is just where Social-Democracy comes in (and not only Social-Democratic intellectuals), introducing socialist consciousness into the labour movement. . . .”

Lenin had a very high opinion of Comrade Stalin’s article. “Answer to a Social-Democrat.”

In the central organ of the Party, *Proletary*, No. 22, 1905, Lenin wrote:

“In the article ‘Answer to a Social-Democrat,’ we find an excellent formulation of the question of the famous ‘introduction of consciousness from without.’

“The author divides this question into four independent parts:

“1) The philosophic question of the relation of consciousness to being: being determines consciousness. In conformity with the existence of two classes, two kinds of consciousness arise: a bourgeois consciousness and a socialist consciousness. The socialist consciousness corresponds to the position of the proletariat.

“2) ‘Who can and who does develop this socialist consciousness (scientific socialism)?’

“‘Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge’ (Kautsky), *i.e.*, the elaboration of it ‘is the work of a few intellectuals, Social-Democrats, who have the necessary means and leisure for this.’

“3) How does this consciousness penetrate the proletariat? ‘This is where Social-Democracy comes in (and not only the Social-Democratic intellectuals), introducing socialist consciousness into the labour movement.’

“4) What does Social-Democracy encounter in the proletariat itself, when it approaches the latter with the propagation of socialism? An instinctive *leaning* towards socialism. ‘Of natural necessity a socialist tendency is born together with the proletariat, both among the proletarians themselves and among those who make the proletariat’s point of view their own; this explains the birth of socialist leanings’ (Kautsky).

“From this the Menshevik arrives at the following ridiculous conclusion: ‘Hence it is clear that socialism is not brought to the proletariat from without, but, on the contrary, comes from the proletariat and enters the minds of those who make the proletariat’s point of view their own.’”\*

\* *Proletarskaya Revolyutsia (The Proletarian Revolution)*, No. 4, pp. 95-96, 1934.

*Comrade Stalin further elaborated the question of the role and significance of the Party* in an article signed "J. Bessoshvili," and entitled "The Party of the 'Independents' and the Tasks of Social-Democracy" (in the newspaper *Gantiadi*,\* No. 5, March 10, 1906); also in an article signed "Koba," and entitled "The Reorganization in Tiflis" (*Akhali Tskhovreba*, No. 5, June 25, 1906). He proved why the economic interests, the joint economic struggle of the workers, necessitate the organization of trade unions, and why the foundation of a political party, a class party, is essential to the struggle for the general class aims of the proletariat.

"For trade union matters, trade union . . . organizations, for Party matters, Party organizations—this is the basis on which the reorganization should be carried out. All those who advocate a struggle against their employers should join the first, irrespective of their political views; all members of the Party, irrespective of their trades, should join the second."\*\*

*In view of the revolutionary upsurge, which gave the Party certain possibilities for working legally, Comrade Stalin raised the question of practising inner Party democracy.* He explained what Bolsheviks mean by inner Party democracy as follows:

"Real democracy means that the Party membership functions in the Party organization, that the Party membership decides Party questions and general practical questions as well, that the Party membership passes *its own resolutions*, and obliges its organizations to put these resolutions into effect.

"Democracy does not consist only in democratic elections. Democracy in *elections* cannot yet be called real democracy. Napoleon III was elected by universal suffrage; but who does not know that this elected emperor was one of the greatest oppressors of the people?

"What we are referring to is democracy *in action*, whereby the Party membership decides questions itself and acts itself. And we must say that this is just the kind of democracy that must be fundamental in our Social-Democratic organization."\*\*\*

\* *Gantiadi (Dawn)*—a legal daily Social-Democratic newspaper which appeared in Tiflis from March 5 to March 10, 1906. Altogether 6 issues were published. The leading articles on behalf of the Bolshevik faction were written by Comrade Stalin under the pseudonym of Bessoshvili.

\*\* *Akhali Tskhovreba*, No. 5, "The Reorganization in Tiflis," June 25, 1906.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*

*Comrade Stalin fought for workers' mass organizations and severely criticized the standpoint of the Dashnaks, who demanded the organization of party trade unions, which would be essentially nationality trade unions.*

In the article "Trade Unions in Tiflis" Comrade Stalin asks:

"What is meant by party trade unions?

"First of all, this means that members of the different parties should each unite in different unions . . . the Federalists in a separate trade union, the Dashnaks in a separate union, the Georgians in a separate union, the Armenians in a separate union, etc. While all the manufacturers are combined in one union, irrespective of their political convictions, the Dashnak-tsakani advise us to break up into separate groups and in this way to undermine our unity."\*

Further, Comrade Stalin pointed to the potential harm of the "party trade unions" slogan.

"The point is that party trade unions create a gulf between class conscious and non-class conscious workers. Everyone knows that there are workers who do not belong to any party. . . . Is it not necessary to draw them in? And now, instead of drawing them in, the Dashnak-tsakani shut the doors of the trade unions to them, frighten them away, destroy the bridge between the class conscious and non-class conscious workers and so considerably weaken the unity of the workers."\*\*

In the articles "The Party of the 'Independents' and Social-Democracy," signed "J. Bessoshvili" (*Gantiadi*, No. 5, March 10, 1906), "The Struggle of the Classes" (*Akhali Droyeba*, No. 1, November 14, 1906), and others, *Comrade Stalin proved the necessity of strong Party leadership in the trade unions.*

Comrade Stalin relentlessly exposed and attacked the nationalist party of the Georgian Federalists. His article "Political Chameleons" contains the following devastating description of this party:

" . . . The chameleon's distinguishing feature is that he is forever changing his colour. It is a well-known fact that every animal has its own particular colouring; but the chameleon's nature is not satisfied with this; he assumes a lion's colour when he is with the lion, a wolf's when he is with the wolf, a frog's when he is with the frog, depending on which colour

\* *Ibid.*, No. 12, Aug. 15, 1906, "Trade Unions in Tiflis."

\*\* *Ibid.*

is more to his advantage at the time, like a man who is hypocritical and unprincipled, he is mine when with me, yours when with you, a reactionary with a reactionary, a revolutionary with a revolutionary provided he can somehow creep into a loophole and get what he wants. . . .

"Time was when the party of the proletariat roared and shook the country. How did these anarchist-Federalist babblers act then? They looked at this party with envy, coveted its lot for itself, and, hiding round corners, applauded it discreetly. Why did they act this way? Because it was more to their advantage at the time; everyone knows that it is not so easy to ridicule or abuse a victor. Now that the wind has veered to reaction and turned the wheel back these gentry have changed their colour and are reviling the party of the same proletariat for all they are worth. Why? Because today it is apparently more advantageous for them—they know that they will 'get away' with this filthy demagoguery. And what else can they do but bark? . . . Of course the tail-wagging bourgeoisie has nothing left to do but play the chameleon, the consequence being that they will always try to change the people into a chameleon too so as to get the political reins into their own hands. That is why our bourgeois gentlemen have completely assimilated the chameleon's art in politics—blood is thicker than water.

"But all this means that the proletariat must watch the field of battle soberly, it must not be deceived by outward glitter but must fight relentlessly both against the pillars of reaction and against the chameleon tricks of the bourgeoisie.

"The interests of the proletariat demand this." \*

In the years of the first revolution every advance scored by the revolutionary movement of the Transcaucasian workers and peasants was won by the Bolsheviks in an irreconcilable struggle against the Mensheviks.

The Transcaucasian Mensheviks rejected the Bolshevik estimation of the nature, the driving forces and the tasks of the revolution, and fought against the slogan of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, against the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.

The Mensheviks categorically denied that a revolutionary government and a general armed insurrection were necessary, and demanded the establishment of revolutionary local self-govern-

\* *Elva*, No. 3, March 15, 1906.

ment, an alliance with the bourgeoisie and constitutional, democratic methods of struggle against the autocratic regime, declaring that the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry was a Blanquist scheme.

Jordania formulated the strategy and tactics of the Transcaucasian Mensheviks in the following way:

“Smashing the reaction, winning and applying the constitution will depend on the conscious unity and singleness of aim of the forces of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Therefore the political maturity and the organization of these classes is an essential prerequisite for victory. True, the peasantry will be drawn into the movement, giving it a spontaneous character, nevertheless these two classes will play the decisive role, and the peasant movement will bring grist to their mill.”\*

From the beginning of the revolution the Mensheviks advanced and backed the demand for the convocation and support of a representative assembly (Duma).

In an article entitled “The *Zemsky Sobor*\*\* and Our Tactics,” N. Jordania demanded liberal, constitutional tactics in the revolution, flatly rejecting the tactics of preparing an armed uprising. He proposed that the political struggle of the proletariat should centre around the *Zemsky Sobor* planned by the tsarist government

N. Jordania wrote:

“The Russian proletariat as a whole is not yet class conscious and organized enough to carry through the revolution alone. And even if it could do so, it would carry through not a bourgeois but a proletarian (socialist) revolution. Hence, it is in our interests for the government to be left without allies, to be unable to divide the opposition, win over the bourgeoisie and leave the proletariat isolated. . . .

“ . . . otherwise, the defeat of the proletariat and victory of the government are inevitable. . . .

“Let us assume that we paid no attention whatever to the *Zemsky Sobor*, but started to prepare an uprising by ourselves, and one fine day came out on the streets armed and ready for battle. We would then have to face not one, but two enemies: the government and the *Zemsky Sobor*. While we would be preparing, they would be able to come to terms, to enter into an

\* N. Jordania, *Selected Works*, “Burning Problems,” p. 533.

\*\* *Zemsky Sobor*—National Assembly.—Ed. Eng. ed.

agreement with one another, to work out a constitution advantageous to themselves, and to divide power between them. These tactics are clearly advantageous to the government, and we must repudiate them most energetically.

" . . . the other tactics, on the contrary, consist in placing the *Zemsky Sobor* under our surveillance, in preventing it from acting as it pleases and from entering into an agreement with the government. . . .

"As a result of such tactics the government will constantly remain alone; the opposition will remain strong and the establishment of a democratic system will thus be facilitated."\*

In his book *The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Lenin exposed and branded the open opportunism, the bourgeois liberalism, of N. Jordania, and dealt a crushing blow to the Transcaucasian Mensheviks.

Lenin wrote:

"So it is in the interests of the proletariat that the tsarist government should not be able to separate the bourgeoisie from the proletariat! Is it not by mistake that this Georgian organ is called the *Sotsial-Demokrat* instead of *Osvobozhdeniye* \*\* [*Emancipation*]? And note the peerless philosophy of the democratic revolution! Is it not obvious that this poor Tiflisian is hopelessly confused by the sophist, *khvostist* \*\*\* interpretation of the concept 'bourgeois revolution'? He discusses the question of the possible isolation of the proletariat in the democratic revolution and *forgets* . . . forgets about a trifle . . . about the peasantry! Of the possible allies of the proletariat he knows and favours the landowning *zemstvo* councillors, and is not aware of the peasants. And this in the Caucasus! Well, were we not right in saying that by its reasoning the new *Iskra* was sinking to the level of the monarchist bourgeoisie instead of elevating the revolutionary peasantry to be its ally?""\*\*\*\*

The First Transcaucasian Menshevik Conference, held April 14, 1905, rejected the slogan of a revolutionary government and advocated the convocation of a State Duma.

\* *Sotsial-Demokrat* (*Social-Democrat*), No. 1, April 7, 1905, "The *Zemsky Sobor* and Our Tactics." The *Sotsial-Demokrat* was an illegal monthly organ of the Tiflis organization of the Mensheviks. It appeared in 1905.

\*\* The organ of the bourgeois liberals.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

\*\*\* From the word *khvost*, meaning "tail," i.e., dragging behind the course of events.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

\*\*\*\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 67, Russ. ed.



The resolution of this Conference stated:

“Considering it to be our task to utilize the revolutionary situation for the purpose of rendering the Social-Democratic consciousness of the proletariat more profound, the Conference (the Caucasian conference of new *Iskra*-ists), in order to ensure the Party complete freedom to criticize the rising bourgeois state system, expresses its opposition to the formation of a Social-Democratic provisional government, and to entering it, and considers it more expedient to put outside pressure on the bourgeois provisional government in order to secure the greatest possible democratization of the state system. The Conference believes that the formation of a Social-Democratic provisional government, or entry into the government, would lead, on the one hand, to the masses of the proletariat becoming disappointed in the Social-Democratic Party and abandoning it because the Social-Democrats, in spite of the fact that they had seized power, would not be able to satisfy the pressing needs of the working class, including the establishment of socialism, and, on the other hand, *would induce the bourgeois classes to desert the cause of the revolution and in that way diminish its scope.*”

On August 6, 1905, as soon as the tsarist government declared its intention of convening the so-called Bulygin Duma, the Mensheviks came out in favour of participation in the Duma.

The Second Transcaucasian Conference of Mensheviks (1905, at the end of August) firmly expressed its support of the Bulygin Duma.

After the August Conference the Mensheviks organized a campaign for maintaining and supporting the Duma, strenuously opposed the preparation of an armed uprising of the workers and peasants, and hindered mass revolutionary action in every way.

The Transcaucasian Bolshevik organization was the only proletarian revolutionary party, the only organization which led the revolution in Transcaucasia.

*From the very beginning of the revolution the Bolsheviks defended and carried through Lenin's strategy and tactics of revolution, fought for the organization of an armed uprising of the workers and peasants, for the victory of the revolution, for the establishment of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.*

In January 1905 a call to action was issued under the title: “Workers of the Caucasus, It is Time for Revenge!” In this leaflet,

written by Comrade Stalin, the All-Caucasian Committee declared the need of an armed insurrection.

“Yes, it is time we *destroyed* the tsarist government, and *destroy* it we will. In vain Messrs. the Liberals try to save the tottering throne of the tsar! In vain they extend a helping hand to the tsar! They are trying to solicit alms from him, no matter how small, and to incline him in favour of their ‘draft constitution’ in order by petty *reforms*, after having paved their way to political dominance, to make a weapon of the tsar, to supersede the autocracy of the tsar with an autocracy of the bourgeoisie and then draw the noose tighter and tighter on the proletariat and the peasantry!

“On the other hand, the restless masses of the people are preparing for *revolution*, not reconciliation with the tsar; they persist in the belief that ‘the leopard can never change his spots.’

“Yes, gentlemen, your efforts are in vain! The Russian revolution is inevitable, and it is just as inevitable as the sunrise! Can you stop the sun from rising?—that is the question! *The chief force of this revolution is the urban and rural proletariat, whose standard bearer is the Social-Democratic Labour Party*, and not you, Messrs. Liberals! Why do you forget this obvious ‘trifle’? Yes, it is time for revenge!

“‘The storm is brewing, heralding in the dawn!’ Only yesterday—or the day before—the Caucasian proletariat—from Baku to Batum—unanimously voiced their contempt for the tsarist autocracy. There is no doubt that this magnificent attempt of the Caucasian proletariat will not be lost on the proletarians in other corners of Russia. Further, read the innumerable resolutions of workers expressing profound contempt for the tsarist government; hearken to the muffled but powerful murmur in the villages—and you will realize that Russia is a loaded gun at full cock, liable to go off at the slightest concussion. Yes, comrades, the time is not far off when the Russian revolution will hoist sail and drive the vile throne of the despicable tsar from the face of the earth! It is our bounden duty to be ready for this moment. . . .

“And make ready we will, comrades! Let us sow the good seed in the broad masses of the proletariat, let us join hands and *rally round the Party committees*. We must not forget for a minute that *only the Party committees can lead us as we should be led, only they will light us the way to the ‘promised land’ called*

the socialist world! The party which has opened our eyes and shown us our enemies, which has organized us into a formidable army and led us into battle against the enemies, which has never deserted us in joy or in sorrow and which has always marched in front of us—this party is the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party! And it will continue to lead us, *only it! A constituent assembly, elected by universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage is what we must fight for now!* Only an assembly of this kind will give us the *democratic republic* we sorely need in our struggle for socialism.

“So forward, comrades! When the tsarist autocracy is wavering, it is our duty to prepare for the decisive attack! It is time for revenge!”\*

The All-Caucasian Committee constantly carried on propaganda and called on the workers and peasants for an armed insurrection.

On March 26, 1905, the All-Caucasian Committee issued the leaflet “What Are the Facts?” addressed to all Caucasian workers and written by Comrade Stalin.

“Comrades! Only a few months have passed since ‘new breezes’ have sprung up in Russia. That was the time of ‘revelation from on high,’ when the notorious Svyatopolk-Mirsky made his declaration of ‘confidence’ in ‘the public.’ This is just what the liberals were waiting for.

“Their tongues loosened at once and a round of banquets, social evenings, petitions, etc., began. ‘We are the salt of the earth so, for the love of Christ, give us a little freedom,’ they implored the tsar; social-revolutionaries clicked their pistols here and there and people began to talk about the approach of ‘spring.’ The tsar looked at it all and laughed. . . . But all things come to an end. The tsar got tired of the ‘endless pother’ of the liberals and sternly cried: ‘Now, now! An end to your jokes, enough of your noise!’ And they, poor things, piped down and hid in corners. With this the ‘revolution’ of the liberals ended. And the proletariat said nothing, as though deep in thought. Only ‘restless’ Baku did not ‘calm down.’ But what is Baku compared with all Russia? Its voice made the silence of the proletariat still more mysterious. A ‘silence that could be felt’ reigned in the atmosphere. Everybody was waiting for something. . . . It was just then that the Peters-

\* Leaflet issued by the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., “Workers of the Caucasus, It is Time for Revenge!”

burg insurrection thundered forth. The proletariat had risen. Three hundred thousand proletarians demanded 'human rights,' 'Freedom or Death' was the slogan of the insurgent Petersburgers. They were followed by Moscow, Riga, Vilna, Warsaw, Odessa, the Caucasus—and Russia became an arena of insurrection. The tsar and the proletariat clashed. And it was here that the tsarist government retreated. The Russian proletariat answered its bellow of rage, its bullets, with a fearful battle cry—and the tsarist government trembled. It changed its tune forthwith and began to chatter about some sort of commissions; elect people, it said, and send them to me to confer about your needs, I shall be glad to give you satisfaction, etc. It even published 'proclamations' imploring the proletariat to take pity on it and not 'make trouble.' What does all this mean? It means that the proletariat is a power, that in the proletariat the tsarist government sees its most formidable, its most merciless enemy, its gravedigger, that the very people it fired upon will accomplish the destinies of the Russian revolution. The proletariat is the nucleus that will rally around itself all those who are dissatisfied with the present order of things and lead them to storm capitalism. Take the facts of the last months, see with what reverence the turbulent peasantry of South Russia, the Volga Region, Guria, Mingrelia, Imeretia, Kartalinia, Kakhetia, Kizikia regard the proletariat, with what enthusiasm they repeat the slogans of the proletariat—Down with the Tsarist Government, Long Live the People's Government!—and you will understand that the standard-bearer of the revolution, its main nucleus is precisely the proletariat.

"Yes, comrades, *the leader of the revolution is the proletariat*—that, above all, is the fact that appears from the events of the last three months.

"Well, and what? Do we see in the proletariat a striving towards revolution, an intense desire to overthrow the tsarist government? Is it thinking of exerting its full strength? Let us consult the facts. It needed only the signal from St. Petersburg, it needed only the raising of the revolutionary banner there, for the proletariat of the whole Russian empire: Russians, Poles, Jews, Georgians, Armenians, Tatars, Greeks, etc., all, as though by common consent, to respond with a unanimous fraternal greeting to the call of the St. Petersburg workers and boldly challenge the autocracy. 'You can't mollify us with a wage increase, we demand a democratic republic!' they said.

What does all this mean? It means that the political swaddling clothes of the present day do not fit the proletariat, that the proletariat is gasping for breath, is straining towards revolution heart and soul, that the cry 'freedom or death' comes from the depths of its heart.

"Yes, comrades, *the proletariat is straining towards revolution*—that is another fact that appears from the last three months' struggle against tsarism.

"But wishes alone are not enough—the thing is to realize them. To what extent were we prepared to meet the revolution, did we manage to strike a straight road to the realization of our revolutionary strivings—that is the question. Let us again refer to the facts. When the St. Petersburg comrades were shedding their blood and perishing on the barricades, we quietly continued our routine work, and when after a considerable lapse of time we broke our silence and wanted to support the St. Petersburg comrades with our sympathy, they were already cold in their graves. We did not make a concerted advance on the enemy, the revolution found us broken up into petty detachments—that is just why the government was able to keep its presence of mind, and spill a sea of the people's blood with impunity. Had we been organized in a stable alliance, had there been a strong united party at our head and had we made a simultaneous and general attack on the enemy, matters would have been quite different. We had nothing of the sort and that is why we failed. And from all this it follows that in order to realize our revolutionary ambitions we vitally need a united and indivisible party capable of rallying us around itself, of lighting our way and leading us to storm capitalism.

"Yes, comrades, *the proletariat needs a strong party, a party that is a genuine leader*—that is another fact that appears from the last three months' struggle.

"We went into action at different times and that is why the government was able to scatter us. We went into action without arms, barehanded, and that is why we failed. 'Arms, oh, give us arms!' cried the insurgent proletariat in desperation. At the sight of the enemy they ground their teeth, flung themselves into battle like heroes, but because they had no arms they were vanquished in the struggle. Hence it follows beyond doubt that first of all we must arm, and being armed make a concerted attack on the enemy. Organize the insurrection—that is our task, that is what the party of the Russian proletariat must do. Imagine something like this. Let us suppose

that the matter of insurrection has been organized in several large centres, that is to say, the committees have particular groups for work among the soldiers; there are 'fighting organizations'; arms are available, bombs, etc.; contacts have been established with batteries and with arsenals; there are also contacts with civil servants in state banks, post offices and telegraph offices, the committees are connected with the mass of the workers; the crisis is increasing and is making the workers revolutionary. . . . Let us suppose that the banner of insurrection has been raised somewhere in St. Petersburg, as was the case on January 9. Thereupon the Party gives the signal—and the insurrection begins. The armed proletariat, encouraged by a general strike, makes attacks on arsenals, state banks, the post and telegraph offices, the railways; as far as possible all this takes place simultaneously in the principal places mentioned, so that the government has no time to take 'measures.' These foremost cities are followed by the other towns, the latter by the villages. . . . That is what organizing an insurrection means. Although until now we have not endeavoured to organize an insurrection, now, when the proletariat is eager for revolution, when the class interests of the proletariat oblige it to take the leading role—the proletarian party is obliged to organize insurrection, thereby strengthening the grounds for the supremacy of the proletariat.

"Yes, comrades, *to organize an insurrection is the direct duty of our Party*—that is another fact that appears from the three months' bloody strife."

In the same leaflet the All-Caucasian Committee defended Lenin's thesis of the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution:

"Only when our Party organizes the uprising and when as a consequence the proletariat actually assumes the role of leader of the revolution, only then will we be able to derive the necessary benefit from the destruction of the old order, only then will we have firm ground under our feet in future free Russia, and properly pave the way to the 'promised land' called socialist society.

"So let us strengthen the Party, rally around the Party organizations and prepare ourselves for an all-Russian insurrection. While the tsarist government is being demoralized our duty is to fall in and make ready for an organized attack on the tsar's throne!"

Comrade Stalin constantly advocated and explained what the Party must do to prepare and carry out a victorious armed insurrection.

In his article "Armed Insurrection and Our Tactics" Comrade Stalin wrote:

"What new tasks does this gathering revolutionary storm put before our Party? How must we adjust our organization and tactics to the new requirements of life, for more active and organized participation in the insurrection, this essential outcome of the Russian revolution. . . ?

"These requirements have been confronting the Party for several months already demanding immediate solution. For people who yield to every 'spontaneous impulse,' people who degrade Party tasks to merely following at the heels of life, trailing behind it, not marching in front as a conscious vanguard should do, these requirements do not exist. Insurrection, they say, is a spontaneous thing; it cannot be organized; every plan of action worked out in advance is a utopia (of course they are against plans in general, it is a matter of 'consciousness' and not 'spontaneity!'), is a sheer waste of energy; life has its unknown paths, it will frustrate all our schemes. Therefore we will content ourselves with mere propaganda and agitation for the idea of insurrection, the idea of the 'self-arming' of the mass; we will try to take over merely the 'political leadership,' then let who will lead the insurgent people 'technically.'

"But this is what we have been doing all the time, say the opponents of the *khrostists*. The necessity for widespread agitation and propaganda, the necessity for political leadership of the proletariat is an understood thing. To go no further than a general indication of this kind is either evasion of a direct answer to life's question, or a manifestation of complete inability to adapt one's tactics to the requirements of the growing revolutionary struggle. Of course, we must redouble our political agitation; Social-Democracy must try to *subordinate* to its *own* influence not only the broad masses of the proletariat, but also those broad sections of the 'people' who are gradually joining the revolution; we must try to popularize the idea of the necessity of insurrection among all classes of the population, but *this is not the only thing* we must do! If the proletariat is to use the approaching revolution for purposes of its own class struggle, for the purpose of achieving a democratic system

such as would guarantee it the greatest success in the further struggle for socialism, it must become not only the chief nucleus of the opposition, but also the *guide* and *leader* of the insurrection. The technical leadership and the organization of an all-Russian insurrection is precisely the new task which events put before the proletariat, and if our Party wants to be the actual political leader of the working class, it must not and cannot evade this duty. . . .

"Only such an all-round preparation for insurrection can ensure to Social-Democracy the leading role in the forthcoming struggle of the people against the autocracy. Only complete fighting preparedness will make it possible for the proletariat to transform individual clashes with the police and the troops into a national insurrection to replace the tsarist government by a *provisional revolutionary government*. The organized proletariat, contrary to all '*khvostists*,' will use all its forces to secure for itself both the technical and the political leadership of the insurrection, this essential condition for using the approaching revolution in the interests of its class struggle."\*

In an editorial the Bolshevik newspaper *Kavkazskiy Rabochiy Listok* (*The Caucasian Workers' Newssheet*), No. 1, 1905, formulated the revolutionary tasks of the proletariat in the following way:

"(1) To carry on the decisive, resolute conflict, of which we have already spoken;

"(2) To organize a revolutionary army in the process of this 'conflict';

"(3) To establish a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry in the form of a provisional revolutionary government, brought about as a result of the victorious 'conflict,' and

"(4) To convene a constituent assembly. . . ."

From August 1905 onward, the Mensheviks together with the liberals carried on a zealous campaign for convening the State Duma and introducing *Zemstvos* in Transcaucasia.

The Transcaucasian Mensheviks persisted in their treacherous tactics of disrupting the revolution, basely betraying the workers and peasants who were eager for a revolutionary uprising, urging them to enter into agreements with the bourgeoisie and leading them into negotiations with the government.

\* *Borba Proletariata* (*Struggle of the Proletariat*). No. 2, July 15, 1905, pp. 4-5.



On August 29, 1905, as we know, this policy of the Mensheviks resulted in a bloody clash between the unarmed Tiflis workers and the police in the city hall and on the square formerly known as Erivan Square.

Comrade Stalin insisted on and propagated the necessity for a general armed insurrection of the working class, and he exposed and stigmatized the Menshevik leaders.

On October 15, 1905, in his article "Reaction Is Growing," Comrade Stalin wrote:

"Black clouds are gathering over us. The decrepit autocracy has plucked up heart and is meeting us with fire and sword. The reaction is growing. In vain do they point out to us the tsarist 'reforms,' which are intended to strengthen the tsarist autocracy; the 'reforms' are only the setting for the bullets and knouts so lavishly distributed by the bloody government. Yes, the reaction is growing. . . .

"Time was when the tsarist government avoided bloodshed at home. That was when it was at war with the 'external enemy' and 'internal peace' was essential to it. That is why it slackened the reins and watched the movement from a distance. . . .

"But this time has passed. The tsarist government, disquieted by the revolution, has made peace with the 'external enemy' in order to gather strength and settle decisively with the 'internal enemy.' And so the reaction has begun. It has told us its 'plans' in the columns of the *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* [*Moscow News*]. The government . . . 'was waging a double war'—says this reactionary paper—'an external war and an internal one. And if it has not displayed sufficient energy in either of them this is because . . . one war interfered with the other war. . . . If now . . . the war comes to an end . . . the government will have a free hand,' and it will have the opportunity 'of exterminating the internal enemy without any beating about the bush. . . .' After the conclusion of peace 'the government must direct its entire attention to internal life and, in the first place, must suppress the disorders' (*cf. Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, July 31). Later, after peace was concluded, the government repeated this same 'plan' through the lips of its minister: 'We will drown the extreme parties in blood.' With the help of the vice-regents and governor-generals it has already got down 'to business': it has turned all Russia into a military camp, it has flooded the centres of the movement with soldiers and Cossacks and sent machine-guns that were

not used in the war to be used against the revolution. One would think that it is undertaking a second conquest of vast Russia. It goes without saying that the autocracy is declaring war on the revolution. It is also clear that its first choice of a target will be the proletariat as the inspirer of the revolution—that is how we should understand its threat: ‘We will drown the extreme parties in blood.’ Naturally, it will not spare the knout and bullets on the peasantry if they ‘get too big for their shoes’; but for the time being it is trying to silence the peasantry with deceit: it is promising to ‘buy out the land’ and is inviting them into the Duma, ostensibly for their ‘emancipation.’ With regard to the respectable public, of course, the government will not be so rough, but will take all measures to conclude an alliance with it—that is what the so-called Duma is for. There is no doubt that the lily-fingered liberals will not refuse to make peace with the tsar. . . . On August 5, they had already declared through the lips of their master mind that they were inspired by the tsar’s reforms. . . . ‘We must take all measures to the end that Russia . . . avoid the revolutionary path of France’ (cf. *Russkiye Vedomosti* [*Russian News*], August 5, Vinogradov). There is no need to say that the foxy liberals will sooner betray the revolution than Nicholas II. This has been proved in sufficient measure by their last congress too. . . .

“In a word, the tsarist government is making every effort to crush the people’s revolution.

“Bullets for the proletariat, false promises for the peasantry, and ‘rights’ for the big bourgeoisie—these are the weapons with which the reaction is arming itself.

“*Death—or defeat of the revolution* is now the slogan of the autocracy.

“On the other hand the revolution is not asleep either, and its great work is going on without a pause. The crisis, aggravated by the war, and the increasingly frequent political strikes have stirred up the entire proletariat of Russia, setting it face to face with the tsarist autocracy; martial law has not only failed to frighten the proletariat but, on the contrary, it has poured oil on the flames and embittered relations more than ever. No one who has heard the cry of infinite numbers of proletarians: ‘Down with the tsarist government, down with the tsarist Duma!’—no one who has listened attentively to the pulse of the proletariat can doubt that the revolutionary spirit of the leader of the revolution is rising higher and higher. As

regards the peasantry, mobilization was enough to infuriate them against the existing order, the mobilization which ruined their homes and robbed them of their finest sons. If we take into consideration that to all this was added a famine, raging in twenty-six provinces, it will not be difficult to understand which road the much-suffering peasantry must take. The soldiers are grumbling too, and this grumble becomes more menacing to the autocracy every day. The fact is that the Cossacks, the bulwark of the autocracy, are gradually making the soldiers hate them: not long ago in New Alexandria the soldiers killed three hundred Cossacks. Such facts are to be observed more and more frequently. . . .

“In short, a new revolutionary wave is arising, which will gradually swell and bear down on the reaction: the recent events in Moscow and St. Petersburg are the harbingers of this wave.

“What must be our attitude to this phenomenon, what must we Social-Democrats do—that is the question.

“If we ask the Menshevik Martov, we must today elect a Constituent Assembly, in order to undermine the foundations of the tsarist autocracy forever. In his opinion illegal elections must take place simultaneously with the elections to the Constituent Assembly; election committees must be formed which ‘will call upon the people to elect their representatives by a general election; at the proper time these representatives will assemble in one city and declare themselves the Constituent Assembly.’ . . . That is how the ‘defeat of the autocracy’ should take place.\* That is to say, despite the fact that the autocracy is still alive, we can nevertheless hold general elections throughout Russia! Despite the fact that the autocracy is out for blood, ‘illegal’ representatives of the people can still become a Constituent Assembly and establish a democratic republic! There is no need, it seems, for arms, or insurrection, or a Provisional Government—the democratic republic will come of itself, all that is needed is for ‘illegal’ representatives of the people to call themselves a Constituent Assembly! The amiable Martov forgets that this fabulous ‘Constituent Assembly’ will find itself one fine day in the Fortress of Peter and Paul; the Martov of Geneva does not understand that the practical men of Russia have no time for bourgeois tomfoolery.

“No, we want to do something else.

“Black reaction is gathering the forces of darkness and

\* Cf. *Proletary*, No. 17.

striving to unite them unsparing of self—our duty is to muster the Social-Democratic forces and weld them together. . . .

“Black reaction is convening a Duma, it wants to get new allies and swell the army of counter-revolution—our duty is to declare an active boycott on the Duma, to expose its counter-revolutionary colours to the country and to win a more numerous support for the revolution.

“Black reaction is proceeding to a mortal attack against the revolution, it wants to disrupt our ranks and bury the people’s revolution—our duty is to organize, to launch a *concerted* attack against the autocracy and to sweep it wholly from the face of the earth.

“Not Martov’s house of cards, but a general insurrection is what we want: the salvation of the people rests in a victorious uprising of the people.

“*Death or the victory of the revolution* is what our revolutionary slogan must be now.”\*

The Mensheviks enthusiastically acclaimed the tsar’s Manifesto of October 1905 as opening, in their opinion, the era of a bourgeois constitutional system in Russia.

On the day the tsar’s Manifesto was proclaimed the leaders of the Caucasian Mensheviks, N. Jordania, N. Ramishvili and others, spoke at meetings in Tiflis. They triumphantly announced: “Henceforth there is no autocracy, the autocracy is dead. Russia is entering the ranks of the constitutional monarchies.”

The Mensheviks issued the slogan of disarming the working class. “We do not want arms, down with arms!” they said.

Comrade Stalin untiringly exposed the treacherous tactics of the Mensheviks and called for a general armed insurrection.

In Nadzaladevi (Tiflis) on the day of the proclamation of the Manifesto Comrade Stalin spoke at a workers’ meeting:

“What revolution can be victorious without arms and what revolutionary would say ‘Down with arms’? A speaker who says this is probably a Tolstoyan, not a revolutionary, and whoever he may be, he is an enemy of the revolution, of the people’s freedom. . . .

“What is needed for a real victory? For this three things are needed: first, we need arms, second, arms, third, again and again, arms.”\*\*

\* *Borba Proletariata (Struggle of the Proletariat)*, No. 12, October 15, 1905.

\*\* Tbilisi Branch of the M.E.L.I. Folio 34, File No. 85.

Soon after, a Bolshevik leaflet was issued—a subscription list and appeal of the Tiflis Committee—which stated:

“Citizens!

“The great Russian revolution has begun! We have already gone through the first act of horrible bloodshed. The future will demand of us still greater struggle and sacrifice. The first goal which is before us is *the arming of the people*. For the defeat of the autocracy and the victory of the revolution what is needed is arms, arms and arms!

“Citizens! It is imperative that all measures be taken to acquire weapons. It is necessary to smash the hooligans, to curb the tsarist highwaymen, it is necessary to wage a decisive war against the autocracy—civil war and political war. And all this is impossible *without arms*.

“Citizens! Do not shirk your duty—give generously towards the *arming of the people*.

“Long Live the Victorious Revolution!

“Hail the Universal Armed Uprising!

“Long Live the Democratic Republic!”\*

After the proclamation of the October Manifesto the Mensheviks intensified their campaign for the convocation of the State Duma, openly calling upon the workers and peasants to restore order, to disarm and to organize a struggle for reforms along Constitutional lines.

After the proclamation of the October Manifesto the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia became even more active in exposing the treacherous tactics of Menshevism and organizing an armed insurrection of the workers and peasants against tsarism.

The All-Caucasian Committee kept on explaining the tasks of the revolution to the workers and peasants and urged them to continue their heroic struggle. On the day following the appearance of the tsar's Manifesto the Committee issued the following appeal:

“‘Let us overthrow the tsarist Duma and establish a people's constituent assembly.’ This is what the Russian proletarians are saying now.

“The revolutionary battle cry of the workers is becoming louder and louder throughout Russia: ‘Down with the State Duma! Long live the Constituent Assembly!’ This is what the Russian proletariat is striving for now. . . . Only over the

\* Archives of the Tbilisi Branch of the M.E.L.I. Folio 31, File No. 141, Sheet 236.

dead bodies of the oppressors can the emancipation of the people be achieved; only with the blood of the oppressors can the soil be made fertile for the sovereignty of the people. Only when the armed people follows the proletariat and raises the banner of general insurrection can the bayonet-supported tsarist government be overthrown. . . .

"Only a provisional government can convene a national Constituent Assembly which is to establish a democratic republic, a revolutionary army. . . .

"The tsarist autocracy is barring the way to a people's revolution. Through its Manifesto of yesterday it is trying to stem this great movement, for it is clear that the waves of the revolution will engulf and sweep away the tsarist autocracy."\*

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Fourth Bolshevik Conference of the Caucasian Federation of the R.S.D.L.P. held in November 1905, at which the Baku, Imeretino-Mingrelia, Tiflis and Batum Committees and the Guria group were represented, adopted a decision to intensify the struggle for preparing and carrying out an armed uprising, for a boycott of the tsarist Duma, for extending and strengthening the revolutionary organizations of the workers and peasants—the strike committees, the soviets of workers' deputies and the revolutionary peasant committees.

The Conference once more stressed the necessity of an armed uprising as the only method of liberating the people, and branded the State Duma as an implement for the strengthening of reaction.

The Conference set up a Caucasian Bureau to direct the boycott of the Duma and to prepare the general armed uprising.

On November 30, 1905, the All-Caucasian Committee reported the following in *The Caucasian Workers' Newssheet*, No. 8, on the results of the work of the Conference:

"The Conference emphasized the imminence of the moment of 'decisive conflict,' and the great role of the peasants and soldiers in this 'conflict.' As regards the peasants, in order to raise their revolutionary spirit and to rally them around the proletariat, the Conference recommended the immediate establishment of democratically constituted revolutionary peasant committees which would have as their aim the actual emancipation of the countryside. As regards the soldiers, the Conference pointed out the necessity of linking up the soldiers' movement with the movement of the proletariat and of esti-

\* Cf. Appeal "To All Workers," October 1905.

mating it only from the point of view of the latter movement, and proposed that consciousness and organization be introduced into the soldiers' movement, subordinating it to the movement of the Russian proletariat, the vanguard of the revolution. Further, the Conference took up the question of arms and the 'decisive conflict.' It stressed the necessity of 'street fighting' as the only method of liberating the people, branded all kinds of reforms and State Dumas as means of strengthening the old regime, and proposed the establishment of a 'Caucasian Bureau' to prepare a practical solution of the above-mentioned question."

In November 1905, in a leaflet of the Tiflis Committee of the Caucasian League of the R.S.D.L.P., Comrade Stalin wrote:

*"Citizens!*

"The mighty giant—the proletariat of all Russia—has stirred again. . . . Russia is in the grip of a great and widespread strike movement. As though at the pass of a magic wand, life has come to an abrupt standstill throughout the vast expanse of Russia. In St. Petersburg alone, with its railways, more than a million workers have downed tools. Moscow—the quiet, stick-in-the-mud, true-to-the-Romanovs old capital—is enveloped in a revolutionary conflagration. Kharkov, Kiev. Yekaterinoslav and other centres of culture and industry, all central and south Russia, all Poland, and, finally, the entire Caucasus are at a standstill and are sternly confronting the autocracy.

"What will be the outcome?! All Russia is waiting with agitation and bated breath for a reply to this question. The proletariat is flinging a challenge to the accursed two-headed monster. Will a real conflict follow this challenge, will the strike develop into an open armed insurrection or, like previous strikes, will it end 'peacefully' and ' peter out'?

"Citizens! Whatever the answer to this question, whatever the outcome of the present strike, one thing must be clear and beyond doubt to all: we are on the eve of an all-Russian popular insurrection, an insurrection throughout the Russian empire—and the hour of this insurrection is nigh. The general political strike that has broken out now, unprecedented, unparalleled in scope in the history not only of Russia, but of the whole world, might end today without developing into a national insurrection, but if it does, tomorrow it will only shake the country again with greater fury and develop into that great

armed insurrection that must settle the age-old litigation between the Russian people and the tsarist autocracy and dash this ugly monster's brains out.

"A national armed insurrection is the fatal dénouement to which the sum total of events in the political and social life of our country in the recent past has been leading with historical inevitability! A national armed insurrection is the great task which at present confronts the Russian proletariat and imperatively demands solution!

"Citizens! It is in your interests, barring the handful of aristocratic financiers and landowners, to lend your voice to this challenge of the proletariat and to strive together with it for this redeeming national insurrection.

"The criminal tsarist autocracy has brought our country to the brink of destruction. The utter ruin of the hundred million Russian peasants, the oppressed and poverty-stricken condition of the working class, the excessive state debts and heavy taxes, the whole population's complete lack of rights, the endless tyranny and violence reigning in all spheres of life lastly the citizens' utter lack of security in life and property—such is the terrible picture which Russia presents. This cannot go on much longer! The autocracy which is the perpetrator of these dark outrages must be destroyed! And destroyed it will be! The autocracy realizes this and the greater this realization becomes, the darker these outrages, the more appalling the infernal dance it arranges around itself. Besides those hundreds and thousands of peaceful citizens—workers, whom it has murdered on city streets—besides the tens of thousands of workers and intellectuals, the best sons of the people, languishing in prisons and in exile, besides those murders and acts of violence perpetrated day in and day out by the tsar's bashi-bazouks in the villages, among the peasantry of the whole of Russia, the autocracy has devised new outrages to cap it all. It has begun to sow enmity and bad feeling among the people themselves and to provoke sections of the population and whole nationalities against one another. It has armed Russian hooligans and turned them loose on the Russian workers and intellectuals; the ignorant and hungry masses of the Moldavians in Bessarabia and the Russians against the Jews, and, finally, the ignorant, fanatical Tatar masses against the Armenians. Through the Tatars it has played havoc with Baku, one of the revolutionary centres of Russia and the most revolutionary centre of the Caucasus, and frightened the whole province of Armenia



away from revolution. It has converted the multi-national Caucasus into a military camp, where the population is in hourly dread of attack not only from the autocracy but also from neighbouring tribes, wretched victims of the same autocracy. It cannot go on like this! And a revolution must be the only way to stop it.

"It would be bizarre and absurd to expect that the autocracy, the perpetrator of these damnable outrages, would care to stop them or be able to do so. No reforms, no patchings-up of the autocracy, like the State Duma, the *Zemstvos*, etc., to which the liberal party wants to limit itself, can put an end to these outrages. On the contrary, every attempt in this direction and any opposition to the revolutionary outbreaks of the proletariat will help to make these outrages of the transition era worse.

"Citizens! The proletariat, the most revolutionary class of our society, which until now has borne the full onus of the struggle with the autocracy and is its most resolute opponent, its arch-enemy to the last, is getting ready to take open action with arms. And it calls on you, on all classes of society, to help and support it. Arm, help it to arm, and get ready for the decisive battle.

"Citizens! The hour of insurrection is nigh! It is imperative that it find us fully armed. Only then, only with a general, nation-wide and simultaneous armed insurrection, can we defeat our vile enemy—the accursed tsarist autocracy—and raise on its ruins the free democratic republic we need.

*"Down With the Autocracy!"*

*"Long Live the General Armed Insurrection!"*

*"Long Live the Democratic Republic!"*

*"Long Live the Fighting Russian Proletariat!"*

"The Tiflis Committee."

After the proclamation of the tsar's Manifesto the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants grew more intense.

In Tiflis and Baku the Manifesto was answered by mass revolutionary protest demonstrations organized by the Bolsheviks. November and December witnessed an unbroken series of demonstrations, mass meetings and armed risings all over Transcaucasia.

In 1905, to sidetrack the workers and peasants from revolutionary struggle, the tsarist government provoked bloody massacres between the Armenians and Tyurks in Baku, Tiflis and Elizabetopol (Kirovabad).

To put an end to the "disorders" in Tiflis tsarism made use of the Georgian Mensheviks, issuing 500 rifles to them through the agency of Isidor Ramishvili.

In this connection Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, Vice-Regent of the Caucasus, wrote to Tsar Nicholas II:

"... I decided to issue 500 rifles to the labour party consisting solely of Social-Democrat Mensheviks, who undertook, as a departure from their principle, not to use the arms for their party aims."\*

The Mensheviks, traitors to the Revolution, hearkened to the Vice-Regent's injunction with a will, and strove to sidetrack the masses of the workers from armed struggle against the autocracy.

The armed insurrection in Moscow prompted the revolutionary masses of the Caucasus to make a direct attack on the autocracy.

The Bolsheviks organized an insurrection of the Tiflis proletariat. A decision of the council of the Tiflis Bolshevik Committee on December 9, 1905, stated:

"The council is of the opinion that the Tiflis proletariat must join the all-Russian political strike. While taking strike action, the proletariat and all citizens must avoid collisions with the government. But everybody must be ready for this collision. . . . The population must arm, must band together in fighting bodies."\*\*

The strike committee seized the main office of the Transcaucasian railway and the telegraph office and began to regulate the economic life of the city. Nakhalovka (Nadzaladevi, a working class quarter of Tiflis) was in the hands of the armed proletarian insurgents.

The tsarist authorities retaliated with a devastating military attack on Nakhalovka and declared martial law in the Tiflis Province.

On December 22-23 the workers of Tiflis in the district of the Soldatsky Bazaar and Didube came to grips with the tsar's troops in an armed conflict.

Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Imeretino-Mingrelia Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. fierce armed struggles took place in Kutais, Chiaturi, Kvirili, Zugdidi, Samtredi and elsewhere. The whole of West Georgia was in insurrection.

\* *The Revolution of 1905 and the Autocracy*, p. 179, Russ. ed.

\*\* *Kavkazsky Rabochy Listok (Caucasian Workers' Newsheet)*, No. 15, Dec. 11, 1905.

• In a report to the St. Petersburg Chief of Police on December 10, 1905, Shirinkin, Superintendent of Police in the Caucasus, said:

"The Kutais Province is in a critical situation. . . . The insurgents have disarmed the gendarmes, made themselves masters of the western line of the railway and are themselves selling tickets and keeping order. . . . I am receiving no reports from Kutais; the gendarmes have been taken off the line and concentrated in Tiflis. The couriers sent out with reports are searched by the revolutionaries and the documents are confiscated; the situation there is impossible. . . . The Vice-Regent has had a nervous breakdown; the situation is not yet hopeless. The Count is attending to reports of major importance but is very weak. If possible I will send details by post, if not, by messenger."\*

As a result of the defeat of the December armed insurrection in Moscow, the suppression of the insurrection in Tiflis and other cities of Transcaucasia, and the treacherous tactics of the Mensheviks and the nationalist parties (Social-Federalists, Dashnaks and others) the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants of Transcaucasia began to wane in the beginning of 1906.

However, armed detachments of workers and peasants maintained grim resistance to the counter-revolution. The Red Hundreds of West Georgia effected a fighting retreat into the forests and mountains where they continued to make guerrilla sorties and attacks on the troops.

Comrade Stalin wrote on the causes of the defeat of the December armed insurrection:

"The December action has shown us that besides our other sins, there is one of a serious nature for which we Social-Democrats are answerable to the proletariat. This sin is that we did not pay attention or paid too little attention to the arming of the advanced elements and the organization of Red detachments. Remember December. Who does not recall the seething, insurgent populace of Tiflis, the West Caucasus, South Russia, Siberia, Moscow, St. Petersburg and Baku? How is it that the lackeys of the tsar could scatter this infuriated populace like a flock of sheep? Is it because the populace was not yet convinced that the tsar's government was no good? Of course not! Then why?

\* Central Archives of Georgia, Folio 63, File No. 3839, Sheet 66, 1905.

“Primarily because it had no weapons, or too few; however class-conscious you may be, you cannot withstand bullets with your bare hands. . . .

“Secondly, our comrades were routed because they had no trained Red detachments that could have led the rest with weapons in their hands, have seized arms by force of arms and armed the people; in street battles the public is a hero, but unless it is led by comrades who are armed and shown an example it can turn into a mob of cowards scattering to right and left at the mere sound of a carriage wheel (remember the October meetings in Tiflis).

“Thirdly, our comrades were routed because the December insurrection was isolated and unorganized. While Moscow was fighting on the barricades, St. Petersburg was silent; Tiflis and Kutais were getting ready for the attack when Moscow had already been ‘subdued’; Siberia took to arms when the South and the Letts had been ‘vanquished.’ This means that the fighting proletariat was split into groups when it met the revolution, as a result of which the government was able to ‘vanquish’ it with comparative ease.

“Fourthly, our comrades were routed because the December insurrection maintained a policy of defence and not of attack; the government itself provoked the December insurrection, the government itself attacked us, it had its own plan, whereas we met this government attack unprepared; we had no plan whatever and had to maintain a policy of self-defence, and consequently had to stumble along in the wake of the emboldened reaction; if the Moscovites had chosen a policy of attack from the first they would have immediately seized the Nikolayevski railway station, the government would not have been able to transfer troops from St. Petersburg and in this way the Moscow insurrection would have lasted longer, which would have had a corresponding effect on the other cities; the same must be said of the Letts too: if they had taken the road of attack at the beginning they would first of all have seized arms and crippled the forces of administration. It was not for nothing that Marx said:

“‘ . . . the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination, and on the *offensive*. *The defensive is the death of every armed rising.* . . . Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattering, prepare new successes, however small, but daily; keep up the moral ascendant which the first successful rising has given to you; rally thus those

vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known: *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace.*'\*

"It was precisely this 'audacity' and policy of attack that was lacking in the December insurrection.

"We will be told: these reasons are insufficient for the December 'defeat;' you forgot that in December the peasantry failed to join with the proletariat and this too is one of the main reasons for the December retreat. The downright truth is that we have not forgotten this reason either. But why did the peasantry fail to join forces with the proletariat, what was the reason for this? We will be told: lack of class consciousness. Very well, but how must we make the peasants class conscious? By circulating books? This, of course, is not enough! How then? By struggle, by bringing them into the struggle and by our leadership during the struggle. Today the village is led by the city, the peasant by the worker, and if insurrection is not organized in the cities the peasantry will never join the advanced proletariat for this purpose. Why did the peasants of Kutais retreat in the December insurrection? Through lack of class consciousness? No! Then why? Because the Tiflis workers had already retreated by this time: 'Without Tiflis we can do nothing!' said the peasants of Kutais. Almost the same must be said of the soldiers." \*\*

Comrade Stalin and the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia supported Lenin's view that the retreat of the revolution was temporary.

In a pamphlet entitled *Two Conflicts*, published in January 1906 by the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., Comrade Stalin criticized the Mensheviks' treacherous defeatist standpoint and said that the proletariat had not been vanquished and that armed insurrection was the only way to victory.

In this pamphlet Comrade Stalin wrote:

"... We must do everything to help the Party in its work of organizing a nation-wide armed insurrection; we must take a most active part in this venture which is so dear to the in-

\* Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, "Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution," p. 135, Co-operative Publishing Society, Moscow, 1936.

\*\* "The Present Moment and the Unity Congress of the Labour Party," 1906.

terests of the proletariat. We must increase the number of fighting squads, train them and weld them into a single common fighting organization, obtain arms even by force of arms, become acquainted with affairs in the state institutions, study the strength and the weakness of the government and draw up a corresponding plan of insurrection, carry on systematic agitation among the troops and in the villages, especially those in the neighbourhood of cities, arm the most reliable elements of the villages, and so on and so forth—that is how we must help the Party to organize an armed insurrection. . . .

“Finally, we must once and for all do away with all vacillations, cast aside all vagueness and irrevocably adopt the standpoint of attack. . . .

“In short, what the victory of the insurrection demands from us is *a united party, an armed insurrection organized by the Party, and a policy of attack*. And as the crisis grows worse in the cities and hunger increases in the villages, this demand is raised by life itself ever more sharply and urgently.

“Some of the comrades do not agree with this and say hopelessly: what can the Party do even if it were compact, if the proletariat does not rally around it; and the proletariat, don’t you know, being vanquished, can no longer be the initiator of a revolution, so that the salvation of the revolution may be expected only from the countryside, which will assume the actual initiative in an insurrection, etc. We can only remark that these comrades are greatly mistaken. The fact is that the proletariat has not been vanquished at all, because defeat of the proletariat is equal to its political death, and the proletariat, thank God, is alive and flourishing politically; it has only retreated so as to collect its energies and fall on the tsarist government for the last time. When the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies in Moscow, in the very Moscow which actually gave the tone to the December insurrection, announced that the proletariat was retreating temporarily in order to make more serious preparations for a more serious conflict, it expressed the thoughts and desires of the entire proletariat of Russia. And if some comrades nevertheless deny facts, are disappointed in the revolutionary initiative of the proletariat and are clutching at the rural bourgeoisie, then we may be permitted to ask: with whom are we dealing, with social-revolutionaries or Social-Democrats; for not one right-thinking Social-Democrat can doubt the generally recognized truth that only the urban

proletariat can be the actual (and not only ideological) leader of the countryside in the present democratic revolution. We have also been informed that the autocracy has been vanquished ever since October 17; but here again we did not believe them, because a vanquished autocracy is the same thing as a dead autocracy, and the fact is that, far from being dead, the autocracy has mustered new forces around itself for a new attack. We said that the autocracy had only retreated; it turns out that we were right. . . .

“No, comrades! The proletariat has not been vanquished, but has retreated for a time and now it is getting ready for a new and glorious assault. The Russian proletariat will not haul down its bloodstained colours, it has been and will be the only worthy leader of the great Russian revolution.”

Comrade Stalin proved the necessity for an armed struggle in the revolution on the part of the proletariat and pointed out that its main ally in this struggle is the peasantry. Comrade Stalin urged the peasants to fight tooth and nail against tsarism under the leadership of the proletariat.

In a leaflet entitled “Not Tsarist Reform, but a People’s Revolution!” Comrade Stalin wrote:

“It is just forty-five years today since the tsar proclaimed to the people the ‘abolition’ of the feudal order.

“This was the time when the tsarist government, defeated in the Crimean War, had left more than 50,000 sons of the people on the battlefield and, upon returning home, had encountered an indignant peasantry demanding land and freedom from it. The tsar had no love for the peasantry, he had no regard for their demands, but he feared their indignation and, not wishing to lose power, decided to mollify the indignant peasantry with petty concessions. The tsar knew what he was doing when he told the Moscow nobles: ‘It is better to abolish serfdom from above than to wait until the peasants themselves abolish it from below.’ And so that the people would not see through the cunning of the government the liberal lackeys of the tsar began to blow their horns right and left about ‘the emancipation of the people from above,’ ‘the boon from the tsar’s grace,’ the ‘tsar-little-father, the liberator of the peasants,’ and so on and so forth.

“The peasants awaited the proclamation of the tsar’s manifesto with all the more impatience.

"Then came February 19. The manifesto was proclaimed, preceded by an exhortation to the people to pray for the tsar.

"And what then? It turned out that all these promises of 'freedom,' all the hubbub about the 'tsar liberator' were mere eyewash, mere empty words and nothing more!

"The peasants demanded the land which had been theirs from time immemorial and which had been drenched with their own blood. But the tsar took this very land away from the peasants and handed it over to the nobility, allowing them to buy back only part of their own land, and for top prices at that! Thus the peasants had less land than ever.

"The peasants demanded liberty, freedom from the fetters of the nobility. But the tsar, making the burden of these fetters just the slightest bit lighter, cast still heavier fetters upon them, the fetters of the tsar autocrat! Thus the peasants had to work under the double yoke of the nobility and the tsar.

"The peasants demanded the abolition of the taxes which they had been paying to the nobility. But the tsar, merely reducing these taxes, imposed bigger taxes on them, state taxes, thus finally undermining the foundations of peasant farming! . . .

"And so that the peasantry should not revolt in its extremity and trample the throne of the tsarist government underfoot, the tsar invented military service, took their best workers away from the peasants, dressed them in soldier's uniforms and made them swear to shoot the peasants and workers without mercy if they so much as dared to speak of their rights as human beings! . . .

"True, the peasantry obtained a modicum of personal freedom from the government and thereby made the government reckon with the might of the people's indignation—that is why we celebrate February 19—but what does this personal freedom alone mean for the peasants if they have no land and no real liberty? . . .

"That is what they call 'emancipation of the people,' that is how they drank the blood of the people under the guise of 'emancipation of the people'!

"Is this what the much-suffering peasantry wanted? And is it not sheer mockery of the peasants for the pharisaical manifesto of the tsarist government to be called the 'emancipation of the peasantry' and the tsar oppressor a 'liberator'?

"No! It is not emancipation of this kind that the tormented peasantry needs!



"The land was taken away from the peasantry and handed to the nobles; all this land must be taken back without any compensations or remunerations for the nobility!

"The peasants have been put in double fetters, the nobles' and the tsar-autocrat's; both the one and the other must be destroyed and all the land must be made available to the peasantry.

"The peasants have been burdened with indirect state taxes which have ruined their farms; these taxes must be abolished and direct taxes must be imposed on none but people with means!

"The peasants are subject to military service and their best workers are taken from them every year; the soldiery must be disbanded forever and the arming of the whole people proclaimed!

"This is the kind of emancipation the peasantry needs!

"And all this must be done not by the tsar with his pitiful reforms, but by the people itself through a popular revolution, because the experience of the past and the nineteenth of February in particular show clearly that we can expect nothing but chains from the council chambers of the tsarist government, that the emancipation of the peasants can be achieved only by the peasants themselves, and that the very same thing the workers of Europe say about the proletariat can be said of the peasantry:

No saviour from on high deliver,  
No trust have we in prince or peer;  
Our own right hand the chains must shiver,  
Chains of hatred, greed and fear!

"May the peasants remember these precious words of the workers, and may they realize that they can achieve genuine emancipation only by rallying round the urban workers and marching against the old order! . . .

"The peasants must do this and they will do it!

"As for the autocrat brigands who are still trying to hoodwink the peasants with promises of 'bits of land to buy back,' they would do well to remember that their crackbrained plans will fall to pieces when the revolutionary peasants, led by the revolutionary proletariat, cry:

*"Down with the Survivals of Serfdom!"*

*"Down with the Tsar's Reforms!"*

*"Long Live the People's Revolution!"*

*"Long Live the Democratic Republic!*

*"Long Live the Revolutionary Proletariat!"*

"The Joint Tiflis Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.

"February 1906."

Comrade Stalin and G. Telia, a prominent workingman, were sent as delegates from the Transcaucasian Bolshevik organizations to the First All-Russian Bolshevik Conference in Tammerfors (December 1905).

At this Conference Comrade Stalin was elected to the political commission for editing the resolutions of the Conference.

Here Comrade Stalin met Lenin, whom he had known previously only through correspondence.

In his reminiscences, D. Suliashvili, one of the members of the Leipzig group of Bolsheviks, writes as follows about Comrade Stalin's correspondence:

"We used to receive inspired letters about Lenin from Comrade Stalin. The letters were received by Comrade M. Davitashvili.\* In these letters Comrade Stalin expressed his admiration of Lenin, his unswerving, purely Marxian tactics, his solution of the problems encountered in building the Party, and so forth. In one of these letters Comrade Stalin called Lenin a 'mountain eagle' and expressed great enthusiasm about his relentless struggle against the Mensheviks. We forwarded these letters to Lenin and soon received a reply from him in which he called Stalin the 'fiery Colchian.'"

The revolutionary situation at the end of 1905, the imminence of a national armed insurrection, the fact that the bourgeoisie had gone over to the camp of counter-revolution, the bitter Party struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks throughout Russia just as in Transcaucasia, gave rise to a sentiment among the rank-and-file Social-Democratic workers for unity between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

With a view to forming a united front with the workers who were following the Mensheviks, of tearing them away from the Mensheviks and winning them over to their side, Lenin, the Bolsheviks, decided to agree to a formal union with the Mensheviks.

In December 1905 the Tammerfors Conference of Bolsheviks voted for unity with the Mensheviks.

\* M. Davitashvili was a member of the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. during 1905-07.

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia solved the question of unity in a Leninist spirit.

At the end of 1905 the Fourth Conference of Bolsheviks agreed to unity in principle, on the basis of the obligatory recognition and carrying out of Lenin's organizational principles.

A decision of the Fourth Conference of the Caucasian League of the R.S.D.L.P. said:

"Noting as a welcome fact the ever increasing trend in our Party in favour of a complete merger between the two halves of the Party, and bearing in mind that this trend can lead to the desired results only after the general conditions for amalgamation have been made clear, the Fourth Conference of the Caucasian League of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is of the opinion that:

"a) the recognition of Paragraph 1 of the Rules adopted at the Third Party Congress, including the organizational centralism that arises from this paragraph, must be the principal condition for *amalgamation* in both the local and 'higher' bodies of the Party;

"b) the existing differences on tactics, which can be settled by congresses of a united Party, cannot and should not hinder amalgamation into a single Party;

"c) for the purpose of really achieving an amalgamation of the two halves of the Party, it is essential to proceed immediately, wherever possible, to the work of amalgamating the local Party organizations on the basis of the principal condition mentioned above, and wherever this is not possible to enter into an *agreement* with the Mensheviks on the basis of joint practical slogans during public action by the proletariat.

"In regard to the question as to whether complete amalgamation within our Party is to be prepared by means of conferences or by means of congresses, the present Conference favours the Central Committee's plan of parallel congresses."\*

In 1906 the Tiflis and Baku "Unity" Conferences and the Transcaucasian Congress of Bolshevik and Menshevik organizations were held, at which formal amalgamation was effected, and the United Tiflis and Baku Committees as well as the United Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. were elected.

As a matter of fact, however, the Mensheviks continued to

\* Cf. *Caucasian Workers' Newssheet*, No. 8, December 3, 1905.

backslide into rank opportunism so that unity with them was, to all intents and purposes, not realized.

In 1906, parallel with the "United" Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., a Bolshevik centre existed and functioned. This was the Regional Bureau of Bolsheviks including J. Stalin, M. Tskhakaya, Ph. Makharadze, M. Davitashvili, S. Shaumyan, A. Japaridze, V. Naneishvili, and others.

The Bolsheviks were forced to pursue the line of a split, of a break with the Mensheviks, and fought to isolate the Menshevik leaders with the prospect of winning over the Social-Democratic workers.

*During the entire course of the Revolution of 1905-07 and in the period of reaction, the Bolsheviks both in Russia and in Transcaucasia were and remained an independent organization.*

*In the fight against the Mensheviks of Transcaucasia Comrade Stalin supported, explained and propagated Lenin's theory of revolution, the Bolshevik strategic slogan of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, and pointed out the tactical tasks of the proletariat.*

Comrade Stalin carried on an unceasing, day-to-day ideological, organizational and political struggle against the Mensheviks of Transcaucasia and of all Russia.

Speaking at the Fourth ("Unity") Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (in Stockholm, 1906), Comrade Stalin (Ivanovich) explained the necessity for the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution:

"We are on the eve of a new explosion; the revolution is on the upgrade and we must lead it to its conclusion. We are all in agreement with this. But under what conditions can we and must we do this: under the conditions of the hegemony of the proletariat, or under the conditions of the hegemony of the bourgeois democrats? Here is where the fundamental difference of opinion begins. In his *Two Dictatorships* Comrade Martynov has already said that the hegemony of the proletariat in the present bourgeois revolution is a harmful utopia. The same idea lurks behind his speech of yesterday. The comrades who applauded him must agree with him. If this is so, if in the opinion of the Menshevik comrades we need, not the hegemony of the proletariat, but the hegemony of the democratic bourgeoisie, then it is self-evident that we should not take a direct, active part either in the organization of an armed insurrection or in the seizure of power. This is the 'scheme' of the Mensheviks.

“If, on the contrary, the class interests of the proletariat lead to its hegemony, if the proletariat must march at the head of the present revolution and not at its tail, then it is self-understood that the proletariat cannot refrain either from active participation in the organization of the armed uprising or from the seizure of power. This is the ‘scheme’ of the Bolsheviks. Either the hegemony of the proletariat, or the hegemony of the democratic bourgeoisie—that is how the question stands in the Party, and herein lie our differences of opinion.”\*

In his pamphlet *The Present Moment and the Unity Congress of the Workers’ Party* (1906) Comrade Stalin substantiated and developed the views of the Bolsheviks on the nature and driving forces of the revolution, on the attitude to be taken towards the State Duma, and on armed insurrection, at the same time subjecting the liberal-bourgeois ideas of the Mensheviks to withering criticism.

“It is no longer a secret to anyone that the people’s revolution has not perished, that in spite of the ‘December defeat’ it is still growing and rushing impetuously towards a higher point. We say that it must be so: the driving forces of the revolution are not dying down; the crisis is becoming greater and greater; famine, completely ruining the countryside, is becoming more acute and widespread from day to day, and this means that the hour is not far off when the revolutionary indignation of the people will burst forth in a formidable torrent.

“Yes, the facts tell us that in reality a new attack is being prepared, of greater severity and power than the December offensive; we are living on the eve of an insurrection.

“On the other hand, the counter-revolution, so abominated by the people, is gathering forces and steadily reinforcing itself. It has already succeeded in organizing a camarilla; it is rallying all the dark forces to its colours; it stands at the head of the Black Hundred ‘movement’; it is preparing a new offensive against the people’s revolution; it is mustering the blood-thirsty landowners and manufacturers, and in this way is preparing with pomp and fanfare to smash the people’s revolution.

“And the further things go, the more sharply the country is being divided into two hostile camps—the camp of revo-

\* *Minutes of the Fourth (“Unity”) Congress of the R.S.D L.P.*, p. 235, 1934, Russ. ed.

lution and the camp of counter-revolution; the more menacing the confrontation between the two leaders of the two camps—the proletariat and the tsarist government—the clearer it becomes that all bridges between them have been burned. One of the two: *either* the victory of the revolution and the autocracy of the people, *or* the victory of counter-revolution and the tsarist autocracy. Whoever steers a middle course betrays the revolution! He who is not with us is against us! The miserable Duma with its miserable Cadets is high and dry in this mid-stream. It wants to reconcile the revolution with the counter-revolution, so that the wolves and the sheep may lie down together—and thus ‘at one stroke’ lull the storm of the revolution. That is why the Duma has so far done nothing but beat the air; that is why it has not been able to rally any part of the people around it, and is left high and dry. The street still remains the main arena of struggle. The facts prove this. Moreover the same facts tell us that in today’s struggle, in the street fighting, and not in the palaver in the Duma, the forces of counter-revolution are weakening and disintegrating day by day, while the forces of revolution are growing and mobilizing themselves; that the consolidation and organization of the revolutionary forces are taking place under the command of the advanced workers and not of the bourgeoisie. And this means that the victory of the present revolution is *possible*, and that it *is possible* to carry it through to the end. It is possible, however, only *if* the advanced workers continue to lead it, *if* the class-conscious proletariat carries out the job of leading the revolution *properly*.”

In July 1906, after the First State Duma was dissolved, Comrade Stalin urged the masses to carry on a revolutionary struggle outside the Duma:

“The reaction has dissolved the Duma—consequently it is our duty to fight with yet greater self-sacrifice for a real parliament, for a democratic republic and not to be satisfied in the future with a sham parliament like the Duma.”\*

“After the dispersed Duma must come organized street action; upon the ruins of the Duma the power of the street must be built.”\*\*

\* *Akhali Tskhovreba*, No. 17, July 11, 1906, “The Reaction is Becoming More Violent, Close your Ranks.”

\*\* *Ibid.*, No. 18, July 12, 1906, “The Dissolved Duma and the United Street.”

*Comrade Stalin proved the validity of the Bolshevik program on the agrarian question.*

The newspaper *Elva*\* of March 1906, Nos. 5, 9, 10 and 11, contains articles on the agrarian question by Comrade Stalin (signed J. Bessoshvili), in which he vigorously advocates the slogan of the confiscation of the land:

“Only this (confiscation) can bring the peasant movement to completion, only this can reinforce the people’s energy, only this can scatter the antiquated remains of serfdom to the winds.”\*\*

Hence:

“The present movement in the countryside is a movement for the liberation of the peasants.

“... For the liberation of the peasants it is necessary to do away with the remnants of *serfdom*; for the destruction of these remnants it is necessary to confiscate all the land of the landowners and the government.”\*\*\*

Comrade Stalin effectively denounced those who clung to the old formulation of the agrarian question, the demand for the confiscation of the *otrezki* \*\*\*\* (1903):

“In 1903, when the Party spoke about *otrezki* the Russian peasantry had not yet been drawn into the movement. It was the duty of the Party to launch a slogan in the countryside that would fire the hearts of the peasants and rouse the peasantry against the remnants of serfdom. The *otrezki*, being for the Russian peasantry a vivid reminder of the injustice of the remnants of serfdom, provided just the slogan.

“Since then times have changed. The peasant movement has grown. . . . Today the point is not *how* the peasantry *must be drawn* into the movement, *but what the peasantry which has come into the movement must demand*. It is clear that

\* *Elva* (*Lightning*)—a daily Social-Democratic newspaper in the Georgian language, first published on March 12, 1906, in Tiflis. Twenty-eight issues appeared. The editorials which appeared in the name of the Bolshevik faction were written by Comrade Stalin under the pseudonym of Bessoshvili.

\*\* *Elva*, March 17, 1906, “The Agrarian Question,” first article.

\*\*\* *Ibid*, March 22, 1906, “The Agrarian Question,” second article.

\*\*\*\* *Otrezki* (literally, “cut off pieces”)—the name given to those parts of the land which were taken from the peasants and given to the landlords when serfdom was legally abolished in 1861.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

definite demands are necessary here; hence the Party tells the peasantry that they must demand the confiscation of all landed holdings.”\*

In his introduction to Kautsky's pamphlet *The Driving Forces and Prospects of the Russian Revolution* (February 1907), Comrade Stalin again substantiated and amplified the Bolshevik views concerning the nature and driving forces of the Russian revolution, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, the hegemony of the proletariat and the counter-revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie, and participation in a provisional revolutionary government.

“The *first* question, which splits Russian Social-Democracy into two parts, is the question of the general character of our revolution. That our revolution is a bourgeois-democratic one and not a socialist one, that it must end in the destruction of feudalism and not of capitalism, is clear to all. But the question arises, who will lead this revolution, who will rally the discontented elements of the people to it—the bourgeoisie or the proletariat? Will the proletariat trail behind the bourgeoisie, as happened in France, or will the bourgeoisie follow the proletariat? That is how the question stands.

“The Mensheviks say, through the mouth of Martynov, that our revolution is a bourgeois revolution; that it is a repetition of the French Revolution; and that since the French Revolution, being a bourgeois revolution, was led by the bourgeoisie, therefore the bourgeoisie must lead our revolution too. ‘The hegemony of the proletariat is a harmful utopia.’ . . . ‘The proletariat must follow the extreme bourgeois opposition.’ (Cf. *Two Dictatorships*, by Martynov.)

“But the Bolsheviks say: True, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution; but that does not by any means signify that it is a repetition of the French Revolution, and consequently neither does it mean that the bourgeoisie must necessarily lead it, as was the case in France. In France the proletariat was an unorganized force having little class consciousness, in consequence of which the hegemony in the revolution was left to the bourgeoisie; in our country, however, the proletariat is a comparatively more class-conscious and organized force, as a result of which it is no longer satisfied with playing the part of a hanger-on to the bourgeoisie, but, as the most revolutionary class, is heading the present-day movement. The

\* *Elva*, March 17, 1906, “The Agrarian Question,” first article.



hegemony of the proletariat is no utopia, it is a living fact; the proletariat is actually uniting the discontented elements around itself. And whoever advises it to 'follow the bourgeois opposition' is only obstructing the independence of the proletariat, is trying to turn the Russian proletariat into a tool of the bourgeoisie. (*Cf. The Two Tactics*, by Lenin.)

"The *second* question on which we disagree is: can the liberal bourgeoisie at least be an ally of the proletariat in the present revolution?

"The Bolsheviks say that it cannot. True, in the French Revolution the liberal\* bourgeoisie played a revolutionary role, but that was because the class struggle there was not so acute; the proletariat was not very class conscious and was content to play the satellite to the liberals, whereas in our country the class struggle is extremely acute, the proletariat is much more class conscious and is not in the least willing to reconcile itself to the role of satellite to the liberals. Wherever the proletariat fights class consciously, the liberal bourgeoisie ceases to be revolutionary. That is why the liberal Cadets, taking fright at the struggle of the proletariat, are seeking shelter under the wing of reaction. That is why they are fighting against the revolution more than against the reaction. That is why the Cadets will sooner conclude an alliance with the reaction against the revolution than an alliance with the revolution. Yes, our liberal bourgeoisie and its defenders, the Cadets, are allies of the reaction; they are the 'enlightened' enemies of the revolution. The peasant poor are something quite different. The Bolsheviks say that only the poor peasantry will lend a hand to the revolutionary proletariat, and only it is able to conclude a stable alliance with the proletariat for the full duration of the present revolution. In its turn, it is precisely the poor peasantry that the proletariat must support against the reaction and the Cadets. If these two forces conclude an alliance with each other, if the workers and peasants support one another, the victory of the revolution will be assured. Without this the victory of the revolution is impossible. That is why the Bolsheviks do not support the Cadets, either in the Duma or outside it, in the first stage of the elections. That is why the Bolsheviks support only the revolutionary representatives of the peasants, both during the elections and in the Duma, against the reaction and the Cadets. That is why the Bolsheviks rally the broad masses of the people around the revolutionary *part* of the Duma only, not around

the *whole* Duma. That is why the Bolsheviks do not support the demand for a Cadet ministry. (*Cf. The Two Tactics and The Victory of the Cadets*, by Lenin.)

"The Menshevik comrades reason quite differently. True, the liberal bourgeoisie vacillates between reaction and revolution, but in their opinion, it will nevertheless join the revolution ultimately, it will nevertheless play a revolutionary role. Why? Because the liberal bourgeoisie played a revolutionary role in France also; because it stands in opposition to the old order, and consequently will be obliged to join the revolution.

"In the opinion of the Mensheviks the liberal bourgeoisie and the Cadets defending it cannot be called traitors in the present revolution; they are the allies of the revolution. That is why the Mensheviks support them, both during elections and in the Duma. The Mensheviks assert that the class struggle should never overshadow the common struggle. That is just why they are urging the masses of the people to rally around the *whole* Duma, not its revolutionary *part* alone; that is just why they are supporting the demand for a Cadet ministry with might and main; that is just why the Mensheviks are ready to consign the maximum program to oblivion, to curtail the minimum program and to renounce the democratic republic, anything to avoid frightening the Cadets away from them. Perhaps some reader may consider that this is a slander against the Mensheviks, and demand that we produce facts. Here are the facts. Here is what the Menshevik leader Cherevanin wrote on the eve of the elections: 'It would be stupid and reckless on the part of the proletariat if, as it is advised by some people, it were to join with the peasants in struggle against the government and the bourgeoisie, for the purpose of winning a sovereign and popular constituent assembly.' We are striving at present, he says, for an agreement with the Cadets and for a Cadet ministry. (*Cf. the magazine Nashe Dyelo [Our Cause]*, No. 1.)

"But all this was just in writing. A second leader of the Mensheviks, Plekhanov, did not stop here, but wanted to carry out what had been written. At the time when a fierce discussion was going on in the Party on the question of election tactics, when it was asked whether or not an agreement with the Cadets during the first stage of the elections was possible, Plekhanov considered even an *agreement* with the Cadets insufficient, and began to advocate a direct bloc with

the Cadets, a temporary *merger* with them. Recall Plekhanov's short article in the newspaper *Tovarishch* [*Comrade*], of November 24 (1906). One of the readers of *Tovarishch* asks Plekhanov whether or not it is possible to set up a common platform between the Social-Democrats and the Cadets, and if it is possible, 'what should be . . . this common election platform?' Plekhanov answers that a common election platform is *necessary* and that the 'sovereign Duma should serve' as such a platform. . . . 'Any other answer is inconceivable.' (*Cf. Tovarishch*, November 24, 1906.)

"What do Plekhanov's words imply? They imply only one thing: that during elections the party of the proletarians, *i.e.*, Social-Democracy, must actually *join* with the party of the employers, *i.e.*, with the Cadets, and together with them must issue agitational leaflets appealing to the workers; it must actually abandon the slogan of a national constituent assembly, abandon the Social-Democratic minimum program, and advance the Cadet slogan of a sovereign State Duma instead. In reality it is a repudiation of our minimum program for the purpose of casting a spell over the Cadets, of standing higher in their estimation.

"As you see, the Mensheviks are so carried away by the 'revolutionary-mindedness' of the liberal bourgeoisie, they place so much hope in its 'revolutionary' character, that in deference to it they are ready to consign the Social-Democratic program itself to oblivion. . . .

"The *third* question on which we disagree is: what is the class essence of the victory of our revolution, or, to put it in other words, what classes must be victorious in our revolution, what classes must win power?

"The Bolsheviks claim that since the proletariat and the peasantry are the main forces in the present revolution and since their victory is impossible without mutual assistance, it is precisely they who will win power, and therefore the victory of the revolution will mean *the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry*. (*Cf. The Two Tactics and The Victory of the Cadets*, by Lenin.)

"The Mensheviks, on the contrary, reject the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry; they do not believe that power will be won by the proletariat and the peasantry. In their opinion power must fall into the hands of a Cadet Duma. Consequently, they support with unwonted enthusiasm the Cadet slogan of a responsible ministry.

"Thus, instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, the Mensheviks propose to us the dictatorship of the Cadets. (Cf. *Two Dictatorships*, by Martynov, also the newspapers *Golos Truda* [Voice of Labour], *Nashe Dyelo* [Our Cause], and others.)

"The fourth question on which we disagree. It goes without saying that during a period of revolutionary storms a provisional revolutionary government, as it is called, naturally arises. Is it permissible for Social-Democracy to participate in the revolutionary government?

"The Bolsheviks say that participation in such a provisional government is not only permissible on principle, but will be necessary from the practical point of view, so that Social-Democracy may worthily defend the interests of the proletariat in the revolution there, in the provisional revolutionary government. If in the fighting on the streets the proletariat together with the peasants smashes the old order, if it sheds its blood together with them, it is natural that it should enter the provisional revolutionary government together with them, in order to bring the revolution to the desired end. (Cf. *The Two Tactics*, by Lenin.)

"But the Mensheviks reject participation in the provisional revolutionary government, saying that it is impermissible for Social-Democracy, does not befit Social-Democrats, will ruin the proletariat. (Cf. *Two Dictatorships*, by Martynov.)

"Now, who agrees with the Mensheviks, and with whom do the Mensheviks agree?

"Here is what history has to say on the question. On December 27 (1906), a debate was held in Solyanoi (a suburb of St. Petersburg). During the debate P. Struve, the Cadet leader, stated: 'You will all become Cadets. The Mensheviks are already called semi-Cadets. Many people consider Plekhanov a Cadet; and really a great deal of what Plekhanov says now can be welcomed by the Cadets. Only it is too bad that he did not say all this when the Cadets were standing alone.' (Cf. *Tovarishch*, December 28, 1906.)

"So we see who agrees with the Mensheviks.

"What is there to be surprised at if the Mensheviks should agree with them too, and take the road of liberalism?" (Cf. Comrade Stalin's introduction to Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Driving Forces and Prospects of the Russian Revolution*.)

In 1906-07, in connection with the influx of Kropotkinist Anarchists into Transcaucasia, Comrade Stalin wrote a number

of theoretical articles on the subject "Anarchism or Socialism." (See the newspaper *Akhali Tskhovreba*, Nos. 2, 4 and 9, of June 21, 24 and 28, and No. 16 of July 9, 1906; the newspaper *Akhali Droyeba*, Nos. 5, 6 and 7, of December 11, 18 and 25, 1906, and No. 8 of January 1, 1907; the newspaper *Chveni Tskhovreba*, Nos. 3 and 9, of February 23 and 27, 1907; and the newspaper *Dro*, Nos. 21, 22 and 23, of April 4, 5 and 6, 1907.)

*In these articles Comrade Stalin expounded the Marxist teaching on the fundamental principles of dialectical materialism. He presented a profound treatment of the question of the inevitability and inavertibility of the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the question of the necessity for a militant proletarian party and the question of its strategical and tactical tasks. These works are an example of how profound questions of the theory of Marxism-Leninism should be linked with the immediate tasks of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat.*

Let us quote some excerpts from these works of Comrade Stalin:

#### *On reformism:*

"Reformism (Bernstein and others), which regards socialism as only a distant goal and nothing more, reformism, which actually repudiates the socialist revolution and seeks to establish socialism by peaceful means, reformism, which preaches class collaboration and not class struggle—this reformism is decaying from day to day, and from day to day is losing every socialist feature."\*

#### *On anarchism:*

"Marxism and anarchism are based upon entirely different principles, irrespective of the fact that they both enter the arena of struggle under a socialist flag. The cornerstone of anarchism is the *individual*, whose emancipation, according to it, is the main prerequisite for the emancipation of the mass, *i.e.*, according to anarchism the emancipation of the mass is impossible until the individual is free; hence its slogan: 'Everything for the individual.' The cornerstone of Marxism, on the contrary, is the *mass*, the emancipation of which, according to it, is the main prerequisite for the emancipation of the individual, *i.e.*, according to Marxism, the emancipation

\* *Akhali Droyeba*, No. 5, December 11, 1906. "Anarchism or Socialism."

of the individual is impossible without the emancipation of the mass. Hence its slogan: 'Everything for the mass.'\*\*

*On the connection between Marxist philosophy and scientific communism:*

"Marxism is not only a theory of socialism; it is a complete world outlook, a system of philosophy, from which the proletarian socialism of Marx logically ensues. This philosophical system is called dialectical materialism."\*\*

*On the dialectical method:*

"What is the dialectical method? . . . It is said that life consists of constant growth and development, and this is true. Social life is not something that is immutable and set, it never stays on the same level—it is in perpetual motion, in a state of coming into being and passing away. Not for nothing did Marx say: 'Perpetual motion, perpetual coming into being and passing away—such is the essence of life.' Therefore in life there is always the *new* and the *old*, the growing and the dying, revolution and reaction—in it something is always dying and at the same time something is always being born. . . .

"The dialectical method states that life must be considered exactly as it exists in reality. Life is in uninterrupted motion; it is our duty therefore to consider life in its motion, in its coming into being and passing away. Where is life going, what in life is dying and what is being born, what is passing away and what is coming into being—these are the questions that must interest us primarily. This is the first deduction of the dialectical method.

"Whatever in life is born and grows from day to day is invincible, it is impossible to stop its forward movement, its victory is inevitable; that is to say, if, for instance, the proletariat comes into being and grows from day to day, then no matter how weak and small it may be today, in the end it will nevertheless be victorious. And, conversely, whatever in life is dying and heading towards the grave must inevitably suffer defeat; that is to say, if, for instance, the bourgeoisie is losing ground and retrograding from day to day, then no matter how strong and numerous it may be today,

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Akhali Tskhovreba*, No. 2, June 21, 1906, "Anarchism or Socialism."

in the end it must nevertheless suffer defeat and pass to its grave. From this arises the well-known dialectical postulate: All that really exists, *i.e.*, all that grows from day to day, is rational.

"This is the second deduction of the dialectical method.

"In the 'eighties of the nineteenth century, an interesting dispute arose among the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia. The Narodniki said that the main force which could undertake 'the liberation of Russia' was the poor peasantry. Why? they were asked by the Marxists. Because, they said, the peasantry is more numerous and at the same time poorer than all others in Russian society. The Marxists replied: It is true that today the peasantry constitutes the majority and is very poor, but is this really the point? The peasantry has long been in the majority, but up to now, without the assistance of the proletariat, it has not shown any initiative in the struggle for 'freedom.' And why? Because the peasantry, as an estate, is being destroyed from day to day, is breaking up into the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, whereas the proletariat as a class is growing and becoming stronger *from day to day*. Nor is poverty of decisive importance here: 'tramps' are poorer than the peasants, but no one can say that they will take upon themselves the 'liberation of Russia.'

"The only point is: who in life is growing and who is ageing? Since the proletariat is the only class which is constantly growing and striving for life, our duty is to stand side by side with it and to recognize it as the main force of the Russian revolution—this is what the Marxists answered. As you see, the Marxists regarded the question from the dialectical point of view, while the Narodniki reasoned metaphysically, because they regarded life as something 'congealed at one point.' (*Cf. Engels' Anti-Dühring.*)

"This is how the dialectical method looks at the dynamics of life.

"But there is motion and motion. The 'December Days,' when the proletariat straightened its back, stormed the arsenals and attacked the reaction, constituted motion, movement in social life. But the movement of the preceding years, when the 'appeased' proletariat established small unions and went on strike here and there, must also be called motion, movement in social life. It is clear that motion has various forms. The dialectical method says that motion has a dual aspect: evolutionary and revolutionary. A movement is evolutionary

when the progressive elements spontaneously continue their everyday work and introduce small, *quantitative* changes in the old order. A movement is revolutionary when these same elements unite, become imbued with a single idea, and with hastened step rush upon the hostile camp in order to destroy the old order with its *qualitative* features from its very roots, and establish a new order. Evolution prepares and provides the ground for revolution, whereas revolution crowns evolution and facilitates its further work."\*

*On the contradiction between form and content in the process of dialectical development:*

"Consciousness and being, idea and matter, are two different forms of one and the same phenomenon, which, speaking generally, is called nature. Therefore, they do not negate one another, and at the same time do not represent one and the same phenomenon. . . .

"This in no way contradicts the idea that there is a conflict between form and content. The point is that the conflict exists not between content and form in general, but between an old form and a new content which is seeking a new form and striving towards it."\*\*

*On the materialist theory:*

"What is the materialist theory? Everything changes in the world, everything in the world is in motion, but the question is *how* this change takes place, and *in what form* this motion proceeds. . . .

"Some say that nature and its development were preceded by a cosmic idea, which afterwards became the basis of this development, so that the course of natural phenomena is an empty *form* of the development of ideas. These people were called idealists. Subsequently they divided into several trends. Others say that two mutually opposed forces—idea and matter—have existed in the world from the beginning, that accordingly phenomena are divided into two groups: the ideal and the material, between which a constant struggle is going on. Thus, according to this view, the development of natural phenomena represents a constant struggle between ideal and material phenomena. These people are called dualists, and, like the idealists, are divided into various trends. The material-

\* *Akhali Tskhovreba*, No.2, pp. 2-3, June 21, 1906.

\*\* *Akhali Droyeba*, No.7, December 25, 1906, "Anarchism or Socialism."



ist theory of Marx absolutely rejects both dualism and idealism. It goes without saying that ideal and material phenomena actually exist in the world, but this does not at all signify that they negate one another. On the contrary, ideal and material phenomena are two different forms of one and the same phenomenon; they exist together and develop together; there is a close connection between them. Therefore, we have no grounds for thinking that they negate one another. Thus so-called dualism falls to pieces. Nature, single and indivisible, expressed in two different forms—the ideal and the material—this is how we must regard the development of nature. Life, single and indivisible, expressed in two different forms—the ideal and the material—this is how we must regard the development of life.

“Such is the monism of the materialist theory of Marx.

“At the same time Marx also rejects idealism. The conception that the idea, and in general the spiritual side of its development, *precedes* nature, and the material side in general, is false. . . .

“It follows that for the development of the spiritual side itself, a certain structure of the organism and development of its nervous system are indispensable. It follows, that the development of the spiritual side, the development of ideas, is preceded by the development of the material side, the development of being. It is clear that the external conditions change first, that matter changes first, and that *then* consciousness and the other spiritual phenomena change accordingly—the development of the ideal side *lags* behind the development of material conditions. If we call the material side, the external conditions, being, etc., the *content*, then the ideal side, consciousness and similar phenomena, must be called the *form*. Hence arises the well-known materialist postulate: in the process of development content precedes form, form lags behind content. The very same holds true for social life. Here too material development precedes ideal development, here too the form lags behind its content. Capitalism existed and a fierce class struggle was going on before scientific socialism was even thought of; socialist thought had not yet arisen anywhere when the process of production had already acquired a social character.

“Therefore Marx says: ‘It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.’\* Thus, in the

\* Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,” Preface, p. 356.

opinion of Marx, economic development is the material basis of social life, its *content*; and legal, political, religious and philosophical development is the '*ideological form*' of this content, its 'superstructure'; therefore Marx says, 'With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed.'\*

"In life, also, the external, material conditions change first, and *then* the mentality of people, their world outlook. The development of content precedes the rise and development of form. Of course, this in no way means that in the opinion of Marx content is possible without form, as S. G. considered. (Cf. *Nobati*,\*\* No. 1, 'A Criticism of Monism.') Content is impossible without form, but the point is that because a particular form lags behind its content, it never *fully* corresponds to this content, and thus the new content is often 'compelled' to be temporarily clothed in the old form, which evokes a conflict between them. Today, for instance, the *social* character of production does not correspond to the private character of the appropriation of the commodities of production, and it is precisely on this ground that the present social 'conflict' is taking place. On the other hand the conception that idea is a form of existence does not at all mean that in its nature consciousness is the same as matter. Only the vulgar materialists (for instance, Büchner and Moleschott), who fundamentally opposed the materialism of Marx, and whom Engels justly ridiculed in his *Feuerbach*, reasoned thus. . . .

"It is not difficult to understand what significance the monistic materialism of Marx and Engels must have for the practical activity of men. Since our world outlook, our habits and customs are engendered by external conditions, since the unfitness of legal and political forms arises from the economic content, it is clear that we must work for the radical reconstruction of economic relations, in order that the habits and customs of the people and the political system of the country may change from the roots up together with them."\*\*\*

*On the class struggle and the inevitability of the proletarian revolution:*

"Strikes, boycotts, parliamentarism, demonstrations—all

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Nobati (The Call)*—a weekly legal newspaper of the Anarchist Party, published in Georgian in Tiflis, from March 25 to June 2, 1906. Altogether 14 numbers appeared.

\*\*\* *Akhali Tskhovreba*, No. 7, pp. 2-3, June 28, 1906.

these are very good as means of preparing and organizing the proletariat. But none of these means is able to do away with the existing inequality. The proletariat will not be able to achieve socialism by conciliating the bourgeoisie—it must without fail enter upon the path of struggle, and this struggle must be a class struggle, the struggle of the whole proletariat against the whole bourgeoisie. Either the bourgeoisie with its capitalism, or the proletariat with its socialism! Upon this the activity of the proletariat, its class struggle, must be based.”\*

“All these forms of struggle are only *preparatory* means for the proletariat; not one of these forms taken separately represents a decisive means with the aid of which the proletariat will be able to smash capitalism.

“*Such a means is the socialist revolution.*”\*\*

*On the dictatorship of the proletariat, its class struggle and the principles on which the tactics of the proletarian party in the socialist revolution must rest:*

“The socialist revolution is not an unexpected and instantaneous blow—it is the prolonged action of the proletarian masses, who attack and capture the positions of the bourgeoisie. And since the victory of the proletariat will at the same time be domination over the defeated bourgeoisie, since *in a time of class conflict* the defeat of one class signifies the domination of the other class, the first stage of the socialist revolution will be the political domination of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie.”\*\*\*

“The socialist dictatorship of the proletariat, the seizure of political power by the proletariat—this is what the socialist revolution must begin with.

“*So long as the bourgeoisie is not completely defeated*, so long as its wealth is not confiscated, the proletariat must absolutely have a military force at its disposal, must absolutely have a ‘proletarian guard,’ with the aid of which it will repulse the counter-revolutionary attacks of the dying bourgeoisie. . . .\*\*\*\*

“All other tactical views follow from this general prin-

\* *Chveni Tskhovreba*, No. 9, February 28, 1907, “Anarchism or Socialism.”

\*\* *Ibid.*

\*\*\* *Ibid.*

\*\*\*\* *Ibid.*

ciple. Strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, parliamentarism are of significance only in so far as they facilitate the organization of the proletariat, the consolidation and extension of its organization, so as to bring the socialist revolution nearer to its maturity."\*

*On the class organizations of the proletariat and the necessity of a proletarian party:*

"The aim of the unions is the struggle (mainly) against industrial capital, for the improvement of the workers' conditions. . . .

"The aim of the co-operatives is the struggle (mainly) against merchant capital for increasing consumption by the workers, through the reduction of prices for prime necessities.

"... The above-mentioned organizations cannot go beyond the framework of capitalism . . . but the workers want complete liberation from capitalist slavery, the workers want to smash this framework itself.

"Therefore yet another organization is needed, one that will rally the enlightened elements from among the workers of all trades around itself, that will make the proletariat class conscious, and set as its chief aim the smashing of the capitalist order and the preparation of the socialist revolution."\*\*

*On the building of a proletarian party of a new type:*

"This party must be a class party, wholly independent of other parties, because it is the party of the class of the proletarians, whose emancipation can be achieved only by their own efforts.

"This party must be a revolutionary party, because the emancipation of the workers is possible only by revolutionary means, with the aid of a socialist revolution.

"This party must be an international party; the doors of the party must be open to every class-conscious proletarian, because the emancipation of the workers is not a national but a social question, which is of the same importance to the Georgian proletarian as to the Russian proletarian and the proletarians of other nations.

"From this it is clear that the more closely the proletarians of the various nations stand together, the more thorough-

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Dro*, No. 21, April 4, 1907, "Anarchism or Socialism,"

going the destruction of the national walls which have been erected between them, the stronger will be the party of the proletariat, the easier it will be to organize the proletariat into one indivisible class.”\*

Comrade Stalin carried on the whole of his theoretical work with exceptional consistency and adherence to principle, waging a relentless struggle against opportunism in the Russian and international movement, against Bernsteinism and Russian Menshevism, against the Georgian Mensheviks—those “Bernsteins in miniature” (*Stalin*)—who tried to adapt Marxism to the needs of the bourgeoisie.

*Thus, the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin and equipped with the Leninist strategy and tactics of the revolution, constituted the only revolutionary party leading the struggle of the workers and peasants for the victorious conclusion of the revolution, for the overthrow of the autocracy and the establishment of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.*

A gulf lies between the strategy and tactics of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks and the strategy and tactics of the Mensheviks. One excludes the other. Hence the unrelenting struggle of the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia against the Mensheviks.

Ph. Makharadze in his book *Sketches of the Revolutionary Movement in Transcaucasia* (published in 1927) commits a gross error.

He writes:

“Here I must briefly point out one circumstance which unfortunately served to retard the development of the revolution of 1905 to a considerable extent. I am referring to the split among the Russian Social-Democrats which took place at the Second Party Congress. A great part of the energy of the Party functionaries was wasted on quarrels, polemics, and inner Party strife. It was evident to all that this was an enormous drain and handicap on the Party leadership in its efforts to strengthen the revolutionary movement among the masses. Indeed, the disagreements and the split, at a time when its leadership of the growing revolutionary movement was needed, resulted in great harm to the cause.”

According to Ph. Makharadze, the struggle between Bolshevism and Menshevism, which is of such historic importance, was

\* *Ibid.*

just an unnecessary "squabble." He underestimates the struggle of Lenin (the Bolsheviks) against international opportunism and Russian Menshevism. This struggle determined the fate of Marxism and of the entire labour movement. It must be understood that it was only in an irreconcilable struggle against opportunism (against 'legal Marxism,' Economism and Menshevism) that the Bolsheviks could build and did build their party.

"Before we can unite, and in order that we may unite, we must first of all firmly and definitely draw the lines of demarcation."\*

"Bolshevism ran the old *Iskra* for three years, 1900-03, and came out in struggle against Menshevism as an integral trend.\*\*

Beginning with 1900, the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin, built their Party in irreconcilable struggle against the Mensheviks. And here, in Transcaucasia too, the Bolshevik organizations grew up and got their stamina by fighting against Menshevism all along the line.

Enemy of the people M. Orakhelashvili deliberately falsified the history of the Bolshevik Party.

In his booklet *The Transcaucasian Bolshevik Organizations in 1917* he slanderously ascribed to the Bolsheviks belief in the possibility of transforming the Mensheviks into devoted servants of the proletariat, and proclaimed that all of Lenin's and Stalin's great work of establishing and consolidating the Bolshevik Party was simply insurance against the possible waverings of the Mensheviks.

A. Yenukidze, since exposed as an enemy of the people, who was a past-master in the art of self-praise and self-advertisement, deliberately distorted the history of the Party, denying that the Bolsheviks effected the split with the Mensheviks long before 1905, i.e., at the Second Party Congress; that the new *Iskra* was the central organ of the Menshevik faction; that Lenin and Stalin carried on a relentless struggle against Glebov and Krassin, the men who had surrendered the C. C. to the Mensheviks and tried to stave off the Third Party Congress.

\* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, "Declaration by the Editorial Board of *Iskra*," p. 6.

\*\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIV, "On the Faction of the Adherents of the Otzovists and the God Creators," p. 163, Russ. ed.

What else can such a statement be called but a falsification of the history of Bolshevism?

It is well known that Lenin and Stalin (the Bolsheviks) not only did not believe in the possibility of reforming the Mensheviks, of transforming them even to the slightest extent into devoted servants of the proletariat, but fought without quarter to expose and defeat the Mensheviks all through the history of the Party. The Bolsheviks organized and built up their party not in order to insure themselves against the opportunism of the Mensheviks, but in order to lead the struggle of the proletariat against tsarism and capitalism, for the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the defeat of opportunism—Menshevism—in the labour movement.

We know that Bolshevik and Menshevik factions appeared inside the Party at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. and that the Bolsheviks have, in effect, been an independent party ever since 1905, *viz.*, since the Third Congress of the Party. We also know that the split at the Second Congress was the sequel to Lenin's struggle against opportunism both in the Russian movement and in the entire Second International.

"Bolshevism, as a trend of political thought and as a political party, exists since 1903."\*

At the Second Congress Lenin and the Bolsheviks strove to overcome the opportunist groups by ousting and isolating them.

As throughout the history of the struggle of Bolshevism against anti-Bolshevik trends and factions, the struggle of the Bolsheviks against the Menshevik opportunist group at the Second Congress was *a struggle for Leninism, a struggle for principles*, a struggle for the formation of a proletarian party of a new type, "a new party, a militant party, a revolutionary party, bold enough to lead proletarians into the struggle for power." (*Stalin.*)

At the Second Congress the Bolsheviks brought the struggle against the Mensheviks to a split, thereby showing the international proletariat that the only way to build a genuine revolutionary labour party was to break away from the opportunists.

On this question Comrade Stalin wrote:

"Every Bolshevik, if he is really a Bolshevik, knows that long before the war, approximately in 1903-04, when the

\* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. X, "'Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder," p. 61, Co-operative Publishing Society, Moscow, 1937.

Bolshevik group took shape in Russia and when the Lefts in German Social-Democracy first made themselves felt, Lenin took the line for a rupture, for a split with the opportunists both here, in our Russian Social-Democratic Party, and over there, in the Second International, particularly in German Social-Democracy. Every Bolshevik knows that for that very reason, even at that time (1903-05), the Bolsheviks had won in the ranks of the opportunists of the Second International an honourable reputation as 'schismatics' and 'disrupters.'\*\*

At the beginning of 1904 the conciliators Krassin and Glebov (Noskov) obtained the upper hand in the Central Committee elected at the Second Congress; they refused to admit that the Mensheviks were opportunists, agents of the bourgeoisie among the working class; they fought against Lenin's demand for the convocation of a Third Congress and were opposed to condemnation of the factional work of the Mensheviks. The lack of principle and the conciliationism of these Central Committee members greatly facilitated the anti-Party work of the Mensheviks.

On the initiative of Krassin and Noskov a number of Mensheviks were co-opted to membership of the Central Committee and in this way the Mensheviks gained control of the C. C. In the autumn of 1904 this C. C. issued a special circular to the Party announcing peace with the Mensheviks and prohibiting all agitation for a Third Congress.

Glebov made a special tour of the Caucasian Party organizations as an agent of this Menshevik Central Committee. In a letter to Lenin and Krupskaya Comrade V. Sturua wrote the following about this tour:

"As was to be expected, the tour of the Caucasus by the C. C. (Glebov) turned into widespread agitation against a congress. This agitation took the form of a fight against the All-Caucasian Committee too."

In 1904 Lenin proved Glebov and Krassin guilty of systematically deceiving the Party, of "violating every principle of Party organization and discipline."\*\*

\* Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. II, "Questions of the History of Bolshevism," p. 394.

\*\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VI, "Declaration and Documents on the Split of the Central Bodies from the Party," p. 381, Russ. ed.



In opposition to the Menshevik C.C. Lenin appealed to the Party rank and file to fight for the Third Congress, and called a Bolshevik conference in Geneva in August 1904.

This conference condemned the factional and disorganizing work of the Mensheviks and mobilized the Party to fight vigorously for the convocation of the Third Congress.

Under the leadership of Lenin the Bureau of the majority committees and the newspaper *Vperyod* (*Forward*) won over the majority of the Party committees in the fight for the congress.

The Central Committee of Mensheviks and conciliators was forced under the pressure of the committees to admit the necessity for convening the congress.

The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. was in essence the first all-Bolshevik congress.

Lenin left the editorial board of the old *Iskra* on November 1, 1903. After this the Mensheviks took possession of the *Iskra*, transforming it into the central organ of the Menshevik faction.

We also know that in 1904 Lenin started the Bolshevik central organ, *Vperyod* (*Forward*).

The Menshevik *Iskra* raged against Lenin (against the Bolsheviks) all through 1904 and 1905. The Mensheviks themselves emphasized the fact that the old and the new *Iskra* were oceans apart. While the old *Iskra*, which pursued Lenin's line, had carried on a relentless struggle against Russian and international opportunism and had been clearing the decks for the struggle to form a proletarian party of a new type, the new *Iskra* fought to wreck the Party not only on organizational issues but on issues of ideology and tactics as well, degenerating into economism.

Lenin's pamphlet *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* contains an annihilating criticism of the new, Menshevik *Iskra*. Comparing it with the old *Iskra* he wrote:

"The old *Iskra* taught the truths of revolutionary struggle. The new *Iskra* teaches the worldly wisdom of yielding and getting on with everyone. The old *Iskra* was the organ of militant orthodoxy. The new *Iskra* brings us a recrudescence of opportunism—mainly on questions of organization. The old *Iskra* earned the honourable dislike of both Russian and West European opportunists. The new *Iskra* has 'grown wise' and soon will no longer be ashamed of the praise lavished upon it by the extreme opportunists. The old *Iskra* marched unswervingly towards its goal, and there was no discrepancy between its words and its deeds. The inherent falsity of the po-

sition of the new *Iskra* inevitably—irrespective of anyone's will and intention—engenders political hypocrisy. It cries out against group spirit in order to camouflage the victory of group spirit over Party spirit. It pharisaically condemns the split, as if one can imagine any other way of avoiding a split in a party that is at all organized except by the submission of the minority to the majority. It insists on the necessity of taking revolutionary public opinion into account and at the same time, while it tries to conceal the praise of the Akimovs, it goes in for petty scandal-mongering about the committees of the revolutionary wing of the Party! Shame! How they have disgraced our old *Iskra*!''\*

As we have pointed out, Comrade Stalin played a major part in the fight for the Third Party Congress, in the fight against the Mensheviks and the Menshevik C.C.

In *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, which was published in 1904, Lenin denounced the opportunism and the factional struggle of the Mensheviks in scathing terms and showed that the split at the Congress was no accident.

In his pamphlet "*A Glance at Party Disagreements*" Comrade Stalin made a brilliant defence of Lenin's views and in true Leninist spirit exposed the Mensheviks of Transcaucasia and of Russia in general, as well as their factional work.

Thus:

1) In the first Russian Revolution (1905-07) the Transcaucasian Bolshhevik organization, which was led by the All-Caucasian Committee, was the only revolutionary proletarian organization that headed, organized and directed the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants of Transcaucasia for the overthrow of the autocracy, the struggle to achieve the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, and the growing over of the bourgeois democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.

2) Every advance of the revolutionary mass movement in the first revolution (1905-07) was won by the Bolsheviks in an irreconcilable struggle against Menshevism and all the petty-bourgeois nationalist parties.

As an independent political Party organization, the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks, armed with Lenin's program and strategy of revolution, harried the Georgian Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Dashnaks, Anarchists and Federalists in relentless

\* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back," p. 465.

*strife. This struggle was a decisive factor in the great achievements of the Bolsheviks in the revolution, a decisive factor in the upsurge and development of the first Russian revolution in Transcaucasia.*

*3) During the years of the first revolution the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia were headed by Lenin's best companion-in-arms, the man who laid the foundations of revolutionary Marxism-Leninism in Transcaucasia and founded the first Social-Democratic organizations there supporting Lenin's "Iskra"—Comrade Stalin. (Loud Applause.)*

### III

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#### *On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations of Transcaucasia in the Period of Reaction and the Revival of the Labour Movement (1907-1913)*

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In alliance with the bourgeoisie tsarism was able to crush the first Russian revolution.

The *coup d'état* of June 3, 1907, soldered the alliance of the tsar and the Black Hundred landowners with the big bourgeoisie of commerce and industry.

A dark period set in, the period of the Stolypin regime.

Comrade Stalin has written the following about this period of reaction:

"The younger members of the Party, of course, did not experience the charms of this regime and do not remember them. As for the old men, they must remember the punitive expeditions of accursed memory, the hoodlum raids on labour organizations, the mass flogging of peasants, and, as a screen to all of this, the Black Hundred-cum-Cadet Duma. Public opinion in shackles, general lassitude and apathy, want and despair among the workers, the peasantry downtrodden and terrified, with a rabble of police, landowners and capitalists rampant everywhere—such were the typical features of Stolypin's 'pacification.' . . .

"The triumph of the knout and the powers of darkness was complete. At that time the political life of Russia was defined as an 'abomination of desolation.' "\*"

Russian tsarism took cruel revenge on Transcaucasia as one of the main hot-beds of the revolution.

In the Caucasus Vorontsov-Dashkov, Vice-Regent and satrap of the tsar, viciously carried out the Stolypin policy of bestial terror and destruction of the revolutionary organizations of the workers and peasants. The revolutionary proletariat and its van-

\* Stalin, "The Tenth Anniversary of *Pravda*," *Pravda*, No. 98, May 5, 1922.

guard, the Bolshevik organization of Transcaucasia, bore the brunt of the sentences to exile, penal servitude and death.

The tsarist government strewed the long trail from the Caucasus to Siberia with the bones of the best revolutionary representatives of the peoples of Transcaucasia. According to incomplete statistics, in 1907 there were 3,074 persons banished from the Tiflis and Kutais Provinces.

It was in this environment of terror and bloody repressions that the Third Duma elections were held in Transcaucasia. The faithful servants of tsarism, Timoshkin, a member of the Black Hundreds; Prince Shervashidze; the bourgeois nationalist Khasmamedov, and the hired agents of the bourgeoisie, the Menshevik Liquidators, K. Chkheidze and E. Gegechkori, were elected to the Third Duma from Transcaucasia.

In the years of reaction Russian tsarism intensified its colonization policy in the Caucasus, inciting enmity between the nationalities and attempting to suppress the national cultures of the peoples of Transcaucasia. In its reactionary policy tsarism could fully rely on the Georgian princes and nobles, Tyurkie *beks* and Armenian bourgeoisie.

In a report to Tsar Nicholas II, Vorontsov-Dashkov, Vice-Regent of the Caucasus, explained his policy of colonizing the Caucasus with Russian kulaks and dissenters as follows:

"... It is possible to single out a considerable number of the most substantial and enterprising families upon whom, as experience has shown, we may boldly impose the sublime duty of installing Russian civicism in the territory and instilling the principles of civilization into it."\*

Tsarism was able to inflame national enmity between the peoples of Transcaucasia. Vorontsov-Dashkov boasted to Nicholas II:

"... I must point out that if there are no separatist tendencies on the part of the various nationalities, neither are there any separatist tendencies on an all-Caucasian scale, because all the nationalities of the Caucasus are at loggerheads with one another and submit to cohabitation only under the influence of the Russian government, without which they would plunge into bloody rivalry at once."\*\*

\* Vorontsov-Dashkov, *Report to His Majesty*, p. 35, 1910.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 14. 1913.

Russian tsarism bestowed special patronage on the Armenian bourgeoisie and the Armenian nationalist party of Dashnaks, using them to arouse national enmity between the Armenians and Tyurks and to further its plans of conquest against Turkey and Persia.

In a letter despatched to Tsar Nicholas II on October 10, 1912, Vorontsov-Dashkov wrote:

“It is necessary to take open action in defence of the Armenians in Turkey, especially at the present time, so as not to antagonize but to prepare in advance a sympathetic population in those localities which, as matters stand at the present time, might willy-nilly prove to be in the sphere of our military operations.”\*

The Great-Power policy of the tsarist government, a policy of terror and pogroms, was supplemented by an economic offensive on the part of the bourgeoisie against the working class. The working class had to bear the brunt of the severe economic crisis of 1907-12. All the economic gains it had won in the period of the revolution were taken away.

The condition of the Baku proletariat in the period of 1908-09 was described by Comrade Stalin as follows:

“Far from subsiding, the economic repressions are, on the contrary, growing more and more severe. ‘Bonuses’ and rent allowances are being taken away. Work in three shifts (of eight hours each) is being replaced by work in two shifts (of twelve hours each) and compulsory overtime is becoming a system. Medical aid and expenditures for schools are being cut to a minimum (while the oil magnates spend over 600,000 rubles per annum on the police!). The public dining rooms and people’s halls have already been taken away. The oil-field and factory commissions and the trade unions are being completely ignored, dismissals of class-conscious comrades are continuing as of yore. Fines and thrashings are being resumed.”\*\*

In the years of reaction a bitter struggle developed between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, widening the split—the breach between them—and giving the workers a better insight into the Mensheviks as agents of the bourgeoisie.

\* Journal *Krassny Arkhiv* (Red Archives), No. 26, 1928, p. 119.

\*\* *Sotsial-Demokrat* (Social-Democrat), No. 11, February 26, 1910, “Letters from the Caucasus.”

In the period of reaction (1907-12) the Transcaucasian Mensheviks, like the counter-revolutionary bourgeois-liberals (Cadets), openly repudiated revolution. The Menshevik leaders—N. Jordania, I. Tsereteli, K. Chkheidze and others—contended that the bourgeois revolution had been completed and that further changes in the political system would take place through Duma reforms. The Mensheviks declared that the proletariat must abandon the attempt at a new revolution as hopeless and direct its efforts towards obtaining the franchise, the right of assembly, the right to organize unions, the right to strike, etc.

N. Jordania asserted that the proletariat must renounce its independent line in the revolution and the slogan of a democratic republic, and must fight together with the bourgeoisie and under the hegemony of the bourgeoisie for a moderate constitution.

He wrote as follows:

“The struggle of the proletariat alone or of the bourgeoisie alone will by no means overthrow the reaction. . . . The passion for their own independence means isolation of the bourgeoisie, a weakening of the movement, a strengthening of reaction, and through this, transformation into an involuntary tool of counter-revolution.”\*

“The revolution will be victorious only if the bourgeoisie, and not the proletariat, comes out as its leader. If the proletariat again stands at the head of the revolution, the revolution will suffer defeat. We must now work out purely European tactics. . . . Our tactics must in no way be adapted to revolutionary actions. Let the bourgeoisie itself make its own revolution, and let us lead the cause of the proletariat.”\*\*

“The thesis that the proletariat plays the leading part in a bourgeois revolution is not justified either by the theory of Marx or by historical facts.”\*\*\*

The Transcaucasian Mensheviks transferred the centre of their activity to the Duma, declaring it to be the “organ of the

\* *Dasatskisi (The Beginning)*, No. 4, 1908. This was a legal Menshevik newspaper published in Georgian at Tiflis beginning with March 4, 1908. Twenty-three issues appeared.

\*\* From a speech by N. Jordania at the Fifth Transcaucasian Congress of Social-Democratic Organizations, reported in *Borba (Struggle)*, Nos. 2-4, 1908, an illegal journal of the Tiflis Bolsheviks published from June to November 1908. Altogether four issues of this paper appeared.

\*\*\* *Azri (Thought)*, No. 17, 1908, a legal Menshevik daily published in Georgian in Tiflis from January 29 to March 2, 1908. Altogether twenty-seven issues appeared.

popular movement." In the Second Duma they constituted a large part of the Social-Democratic fraction.

The Menshevik deputies of Transcaucasia were elected to the Duma mainly by the votes of the petty and middle bourgeoisie and the Georgian nobility. In the Duma they pursued an open policy of opportunism and compromise, a policy which betrayed the interests of the proletariat.

In the Second Duma, I. Tsereteli preached that "it is impossible to fight for freedom without some sort of an alliance with bourgeois democracy" that "the line of fundamental political cleavage in our revolution is to the Right of the Cadets and not to the Left," etc.

When the Second Duma was dissolved, the Mensheviks confined themselves to empty declarations and threats against the autocracy, and urged the workers and peasants to be submissive.

The Menshevik attitude towards the dissolution of the Duma was estimated by the tsarist secret police as follows:

"The Baku workers, who are almost without exception under the influence of the agitation of the local revolutionary organization, have taken the dissolution of the Duma quietly—on the one hand under pressure of their present difficult material conditions which do not allow them to react openly against the dissolution of the Duma without risking the loss of their jobs, and on the other hand *because of the tactics of the Menshevik Social-Democrats.*"\*

During the years of reaction the Transcaucasian Mensheviks carried on a campaign to dissolve the illegal revolutionary party, heartily endorsing the Russian liquidators' plan of organizing a broad, legal labour party. They held that what the proletariat needed was not a militant, revolutionary party, but a peaceful, parliamentary labour party, modelled on the type of West European Social-Democracy, and adapted to peaceful collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

The Transcaucasian Mensheviks consistently carried out their policy of an alliance, of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, which netted them several seats in the State Duma.

N. Jordania and the other leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks strained every nerve to defend the interests of the Georgian bourgeoisie. It is a well-known fact that, in the first place, N. Jordania,

\* Central Archives of Georgia, Folio 63, File No. 133. Sheet 39-45. 1906.



N. Ramishvili and their like tried to disrupt the strikes that broke out at the enterprises of Georgian capitalists.

The leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks, K. Chkheidze and A. Chkhenkeli (members of the State Duma), speaking in their official capacity on behalf of democracy on June 26, 1911, at the funeral of D. Sarajishvili, a big Georgian capitalist, exhorted their listeners to take a lesson from the "cultured capitalists." N. Jordania, the patriarch of Georgian Menshevism, gave vent to his feelings in a pathetic article dedicated to the "glorious memory" of this "European-educated" factory owner. He wrote:

"The other day inexorable death deprived us of a rare Georgian—D. Z. Sarajishvili. . . . The deceased was known as an industrialist, but few people know that he was the first industrialist of the European type. He once told me: 'In our country it is hard to get on your feet materially, to win economic success; as soon as anyone makes a little pile of sorts he is dogged by a hundred hungry fellows who give him no peace until they clean him out.' Under such conditions one must indeed have rare talent and great practical ability to hold off the onslaught of the hungry horde and to use one's substance rationally. If the late David had been a real Georgian industrialist, he would have finished up long ago in the Georgian way—nothing would have remained of his fortune. Only a European could arrange matters so as to satisfy everyone and at the same time not squander his fortune. . . . Once we ran across each other on the boulevard and he called out to me from a way off: 'Take a look at the things your Bernstein is writing! Drop in, take it and read it.' The book had only just appeared in Germany and it was unobtainable in Tiflis. The next day I visited David and borrowed the book. 'What do you think of it?' I asked him. 'What do I think of it? It is a terrible bombshell for Germany. In the whole book I like one place where it says: 'The movement is everything, the final goal is nothing. . . .'"

"Once I found the deceased in his office very much perturbed. And he was no pessimist. 'What's the matter with you?' I asked. 'We have no future,' he began. 'You say and claim that the petty bourgeoisie will engender a big bourgeoisie, but I can't see it. For this to happen we need civic spirit, culture, and we are ordinary yokels. . . .'"

"The deceased was not carried away by revolution like a giddy lad, but neither was he a slave to reaction. . . ."

"And this unique man we are today laying in his grave. He died as he had lived—with open mind and heart.

"Farewell, dear David! Your glorious memory will always be with us."\*

And just who was this "cultured capitalist" to whom N. Jordania paid such profound respect?

D. Z. Sarajishvili was the owner of liqueur and cognac distilleries in Tiflis, also of cognac distilleries in Kizlyar, Erivan, Kalarashch (Bessarabia) and Geokchay. On January 1, 1902, he was awarded the title of Counsellor of Commerce by the tsarist government "for useful activity in the sphere of home industry and trade."

Thus, during the years of reaction Transcaucasian Menshevism openly and finally lapsed into liquidationism, repudiating the revolution, Marxism, the principles of the Social-Democratic Party.

*The Bolsheviki of Transcaucasia waged ruthless war on the liquidationism of the Mensheviki, unmasking them at every step as the direct agents and lieutenants of the counter-revolutionary monarchist bourgeoisie.*

After the Fifth (London) Party Congress, in 1907, Comrade Stalin came to Baku.

*Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks fought steadily in the years of reaction, as always, for Lenin's strategy of revolution, for the overthrow of tsarism, for the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and its transformation into a socialist revolution.*

The Bolsheviks repeatedly explained to the workers and peasants that the defeat of the revolution was temporary, and that a new revolution was inevitable. They exposed the tsarist policy, the Stolypin agrarian reform, the policy of imperialist and nationalist oppression pursued by the autocracy, and organized a struggle under the Bolshevik slogans: "A democratic republic," "An eight-hour day," "Confiscation of all landed estates," etc.

The Transcaucasian Bolsheviks built and strengthened their organization in strict illegality, at the same time successfully applying Lenin's tactics of utilizing legal organizations of every kind (the Duma, trade unions, etc.) for revolutionary propaganda and agitation.

Stalin and the other Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia upheld Lenin's view of the prospect of the Russian revolution, maintaining

\* *Kooperatsia (Co-operation)*, July 10, 1911.

that a new revolution was inevitable. Ruthlessly exposing the Cadets, the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and their like, they prepared the proletariat for new revolutionary battles.

Comrade Stalin vigorously combated the Menshevik election tactics of compromise with the Cadets, who wanted to share power with the tsar and the landowners and who dreaded revolution more than reaction.

Time and again Comrade Stalin stressed the enormous danger of the influence of the counter-revolutionary liberal bourgeoisie and of the Menshevik tactics of subordinating the working class to the political interests of the bourgeoisie.

In connection with the dissolution of the Second Duma, the *Bakinsky Proletary* (*Baku Proletarian*), which was directed by Comrade Stalin, wrote the following in an editorial:

“There has been a First Duma, and there has been a Second, but neither the one nor the other ‘solved’ or could ‘solve’ a single problem of the revolution. Things remain as they were: the peasants are without land, the workers without the eight-hour day, all citizens without political freedom. Why? Because the power of the tsar is not yet defunct; it still continues to exist, dissolving the Second Duma after the First, organizing counter-revolution and attempting to disorganize the forces of revolution, to sever the many millions of the peasantry from the proletariat. . . . It is clear that without overthrowing the tsarist power and without calling a National Constituent Assembly, it will be impossible to satisfy the broad masses of workers and peasants. It is no less clear that it will be possible to solve the cardinal questions of the revolution only in alliance with the peasantry against the tsarist power and the liberal bourgeoisie.”\*

*In the period of 1907 to 1912, the Baku Bolshevik Party organization, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, gained in number, strength and stamina in the struggle against the Mensheviks, winning over the vast majority of the Social-Democratic workers to its side. The Bolsheviks had control of all the workers’ districts (Balakhany, Surakhany, Romany, Bibi-Eibat, Chorny Gorod, Byely Gorod, the railway and other districts).*

*Baku became the stronghold of the Transcaucasian Bolshevik organizations, an invincible fortress of Lenin’s Party.*

\* *Bakinsky Proletary* (*Baku Proletarian*), No. 1, June 20, 1907.

Although Comrade Stalin lived in Baku itself, he used to visit Tiflis for the purpose of leading the Bolshevik organization of Georgia and holding Party conferences.

During this period the leading body of the Baku Bolshevik organization, the Baku Committee, included the following members at various times: J. Stalin, A. Japaridze, S. Shaumyan, P. Sakvarelidze, I. Fioletov, S. Orjonikidze, S. Spandaryan, Kasparov, Makar (Nogin), Gvantsaladze (Apostol), Saratovetz (Smirnov), Stopani, Vatsck, Alliluyev and Veprintsev (Peterburzhets).

The Baku Committee formed a strong core of active Bolsheviks around itself from among the leading workers who were functioning simultaneously on the Baku Committee and in various districts in the oil fields and other enterprises. Among them were Y. Kochetkov, I. Isayev, M. Mamedyarov, Khanlar, I. Bokov, V. Sturua, Kazi Mahmedov, Seid Yakubov, G. Rtveladze, I. Garishvili, E. Sev-rugin, G. Georgobiani, Kirochkin, Arshak (from the Khatisov Factory), Rudenko, S. Maskhulia, Avakyan, S. Garishvili, Tronov, I. Melikov, Voloshin, Ordzelashvili, Bassin, Stepanov (Levinson), Malenky Mahmed (Mukhtadir), N. Gubanov, Velichko, A. Geor-kov, M. Kuchuyev, Samartsev (Shitikov), M. Mordovtsev, M. Bakradze, Zhelezny (Bakradze), Lavrentyev (Turetsky), G. Mazurov, Isai Shenderov, and P. Siuda.

During this period a number of Bolsheviks—K. Voroshilov, Nogin (Makar), Radus-Zenkovich (Yegor) and other Russian Social-Democrats—came from Russia to Baku to establish connections and get information. Several of them remained in Baku for some time, rendering considerable assistance to the Baku Committee and becoming members of it.

During the same period, there existed, parallel with the Bolshevik Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., a Menshevik Baku organization—the executive body of the Mensheviks—which was headed at various times by S. Devdariani, I. Ramishvili, Larin, Martov (the brother), Petrov, and Gerus.

The Menshevik leaders, N. Jordania, U. Martov, N. Ramishvili, Ginsburg, A. Chkhenkeli and others, often visited Baku for the purpose of assisting the Menshevik organization in its fight against the Bolsheviks.

The Baku Bolsheviks discredited and smashed the Mensheviks, winning over the vast majority of the workers.

In his reminiscences, P. Sakvarelidze, one of the members of the Baku Committee at that time, writes the following about the work of the Bolshevik Baku organization and its leader, Comrade Stalin:

“The Baku Committee and its Executive Bureau headed by Comrade Stalin (there were three comrades on the Bureau) directed all the work. District committees worked in the districts. . . . Comrade Stalin was the moving spirit of the ideological and organizational struggle to strengthen and consolidate the Bolshevik organization. He put his heart and soul into the work. At the same time he was in charge of the illegal newspaper, *Bakinsky Rabochy* (*Baku Worker*), the publication of which was fraught with great difficulties at that time . . . he organized the work among the Mussulman workers (with the assistance of the ‘Gummet’ organization), led the strikes of the oil workers, etc. He fought hard to drive the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries out of the workers’ districts.

“First of all, Comrade Stalin went to the districts where the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were intensifying their work. Finally, he settled in Bibi-Eibat, the stronghold of the Mensheviks in Baku. At that time the remnants of the Shendrikov movement—a peculiar form of police socialism—were predominant in Bibi-Eibat. Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin the Bolsheviks broke the influence of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and made Bibi-Eibat a Bolshevik district.”

The Baku Bolshevik organization led all the class battles of the Baku proletariat against tsarism and capitalism. Under its Bolshevik leadership, the Baku proletariat traversed a glorious path of heroic struggle and was in the front ranks of the revolutionary labour movement of all Russia.

“The first general strike in Baku, in the spring of 1903, marked the beginning of the famous July strikes and demonstrations in the southern cities of Russia; the second general strike in November and December of 1904 served as a signal for the glorious struggles of January and February throughout Russia; in 1905 the Baku proletariat, rapidly recovering from the Armenian-Tatar massacre, throws itself into the struggle, infecting ‘the whole Caucasus’ with its enthusiasm; from 1906 on, even after the retreat of the revolution, Baku does not ‘quieten down,’ and carries out its proletarian May Day celebrations every year better than any other place in Russia, evoking a feeling of noble envy in other towns.”\*

\* Stalin, “The Conference and the Workers,” in the supplement to *Bakinsky Proletary*, No. 5, 1908.

The Bolshevik Baku Committee, headed by Comrade Stalin, stormed and captured every position of the Mensheviks. Besides a great deal of practical organizational work, Comrade Stalin was very active in the sphere of theory and propaganda.

In his articles "The London Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party" (*Notes of a Delegate*) published in *Bakinsky Proletary* in 1907, Comrade Stalin made a profound theoretical analysis of the transactions of the Congress and its results, and exposed the Menshevik liberal-bourgeois estimation of the driving forces and prospects of the revolution and the Menshevik tactics.

In his article on the London Congress, Comrade Stalin divides the work of the Congress into two parts:

"The first part: discussions on formal questions, such as the agenda of the Congress, the report of the Central Committee and the report of the Duma fraction, questions fraught with deep political significance, but connected or being connected with the 'honour' of this or that faction, with the thought of not offending this or that faction, of 'somehow avoiding a split'—and therefore called formal questions. . . .

"The second part: discussions on questions of principle, such as the question of the non-proletarian parties, the labour congress, etc. Here moral considerations were totally lacking, definite groupings were formed in accordance with trends strictly defined in principle; the correlation of forces between the factions was at once made evident. . . ."

Comrade Stalin unmasked the Menshevik Central Committee, revealing its bankruptcy:

"Menshevism, which at that time predominated in the Central Committee, is incapable of leading the Party. As a political trend it has suffered utter bankruptcy. From this point of view the entire history of the Central Committee is the history of the failure of Menshevism. And when the Menshevik comrades reproach us, saying that we 'hindered' the Central Committee, that we 'pestered' it, etc., etc., we cannot but reply to these moralizing comrades: Yes, comrades, we did 'hinder' the Central Committee from violating our program, we did 'hinder' it from adapting the tactics of the proletariat to the tastes of the liberal bourgeoisie, and we shall continue to hinder it in future, since we are in honour bound to do so. . . ."

\* *Bakinsky Proletary*. No. 1, June 20, 1907.

\*\* *Ibid.*

In the same article Comrade Stalin gave a classic description of Menshevism as a hodge-podge of all opportunist trends. He writes:

"Menshevism is not an integral trend. Menshevism is a hodge-podge of trends, which are not noticeable during the factional struggle against Bolshevism, but which break through as soon as problems of current importance in our tactics are put as questions of principle."\*

Further on Comrade Stalin discloses a certain inherent law whereby all the opportunist groups and groupings, from the Right Menshevik liquidators to the Trotskyites, consistently unite, and he describes Trotskyism as centrism.

"The formal division of the Congress into five factions (Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, Poles, etc.) remained in force to some, true not very great, extent only until questions of principle (the question of non-proletarian parties, of the labour congress, etc.) were discussed. In questions of principle, formal grouping was in effect abandoned, and in voting the Congress was usually divided into two parts: Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. The so-called centre or marsh was not present at the congress . . . Trotsky proved to be a 'superfluous ornament.' \*\*\*

The same article contains a vivid and damning characterization of the Bund (which, by the way, played a conspicuous part in Baku together with the Mensheviks):

"The Bund, the vast majority of whose delegates has actually always supported the Mensheviks, formally pursued a policy that is equivocal to the extreme. . . . Comrade Rosa Luxemburg gave us an artistically apt characterization of this policy of the Bund when she said that its policy was not the policy of a mature political organization with an influence on the masses, but the policy of a huckster who is constantly hoping and expecting that sugar will be cheaper tomorrow."\*\*\*

In his articles "The London Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party" (in *Bakinsky Proletary*, Nos. 1-2, 1907), *Comrade Stalin devastatingly exposes the Menshevik liberal-bourgeois "scheme" of revolution and amplifies the Leninist theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution:*

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Ibid.*

\*\*\* *Ibid.*

“That our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, that it must culminate in the destruction of the feudal and not the capitalist order, that it can be capped only by a democratic republic—with this, I believe, everyone in our Party agrees. Furthermore, that our revolution, on the whole, is approaching the flood tide and not the ebb, that our task is not to ‘liquidate’ the revolution but to bring it to its conclusion—with this too everyone agrees, at least formally, since the Mensheviks, as a faction, have nowhere yet stated anything to the contrary. But how can our revolution be brought to a conclusion? What is the rôle of the proletariat, of the peasantry, of the liberal bourgeoisie in this revolution? What correlation of forces is necessary to bring the present revolution to a conclusion? Whom to join, whom to fight, etc., etc. This is where our differences of opinion begin.

“*The opinion of the Mensheviks.* Since ours is a bourgeois revolution, only the bourgeoisie can be the leader of the revolution. The bourgeoisie was the leader of the Great French Revolution, it was the leader of revolutions in the other European states—therefore it must be the leader of our Russian revolution too. The proletariat is the chief combatant in the revolution, but it must march behind the bourgeoisie and impel it forward. The peasantry is also a revolutionary force, but there is too much that is reactionary in it; therefore the proletariat will have much less occasion to engage in joint action with it than with the liberal-democratic bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie is a more reliable ally of the proletariat than the peasantry. All the militant forces must rally around the liberal-democratic bourgeoisie as their leader. Therefore, our attitude to the bourgeois parties must be determined, not by the revolutionary formula: together with the peasantry against the government and the liberal bourgeoisie, with the proletariat at the head; but by the opportunist formula: *together with the entire opposition against the government, with the liberal bourgeoisie at the head. Hence the tactics of compromising with the liberals.*

“*This is the opinion of the Mensheviks.*” (My italics.—L.B.)

“*The opinion of the Bolsheviks.* Our revolution is indeed a bourgeois revolution, but this does not mean that our liberal bourgeoisie will be the hegemon. In the eighteenth century the French bourgeoisie was the leader of the French Revolution. But why? Because the French proletariat was weak then; it did not take action independently; it did not advance its



own class demands; it was not class conscious or organized; it trailed behind the bourgeoisie at that time, and the bourgeoisie utilized it as a means to its own bourgeois ends. As you see, at that time the bourgeoisie had no need of an ally—in the shape of a tsarist power—against the proletariat. The proletariat itself was its ally, its servant, and therefore the bourgeoisie could be revolutionary at that time, could even march at the head of the revolution. The case is altogether different in Russia. The Russian proletariat cannot be called weak by any means: it has already been acting quite independently for several years, advancing its own class demands; it is sufficiently imbued with class consciousness to understand its own interests; it is united in its own party; it has the strongest party in Russia, with its own program and tactical and organizational principles; headed by this party it has already gained a number of brilliant victories over the bourgeoisie. . . . Can this proletariat be satisfied with the role of tail end to the liberal bourgeoisie, with the role of a miserable tool in the hands of this bourgeoisie? Can it, should it, follow this bourgeoisie, making it its leader; can it fail to be the leader of the revolution? And see what the Russian liberal bourgeoisie does: frightened by the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, our bourgeoisie, instead of marching at the head of the revolution, throws itself into the arms of the counter-revolution, enters into alliance with it against the proletariat. And its party, the party of the Cadets, openly, before the eyes of the whole world, makes an agreement with Stolypin, votes for the budget and the army to the advantage of tsarism, against the people's revolution. Is it not clear that the Russian liberal bourgeoisie is an anti-revolutionary force, against which it is necessary to wage the most relentless war? . . .

“Hence: the Russian liberal bourgeoisie is anti-revolutionary; it cannot be the driving force, and much less the leader of the revolution; it is the mortal enemy of the revolution, and relentless struggle must be waged against it.

“The only leader of our revolution that is interested in and capable of leading the revolutionary forces of Russia in an onslaught against the tsarist autocracy is the proletariat. Only the proletariat will rally the revolutionary elements of the country around itself, only the proletariat will bring our revolution to its logical conclusion. It is the task of Social-Democracy to do everything possible to prepare the proletariat for the role of leader of the revolution.

“This is the essence of the Bolshevik point of view.

“To the question of who, then, can be a reliable ally of the proletariat in the matter of carrying our revolution through to the end, the Bolsheviks answer: the only ally of the proletariat that is in any way reliable and strong is the revolutionary peasantry. Not the treacherous liberal bourgeoisie, but the revolutionary peasantry, together with the proletariat, will strive against all the pillars of the feudal order.

“Accordingly, our attitude to the bourgeois parties should be determined by the formula: *together with the revolutionary peasantry, against tsarism and the liberal bourgeoisie, with the proletariat at the head. Hence, the necessity of fighting against the hegemony (leadership) of the Cadet bourgeoisie, and, consequently, the inadmissibility of an agreement with the Cadets.*

“*This is the opinion of the Bolsheviks.*”\*

*Comrade Stalin disclosed the social basis of Menshevism, and exposed the tactics of the Mensheviks as the tactics of the semi-bourgeois elements of the proletariat:*

“The tactics of the Bolsheviks are the tactics of the proletarians engaged in large-scale industry, the tactics of those districts where the class contradictions are particularly clear and the class struggle is particularly sharp. *Bolshevism is the tactics of the genuine proletarians.*

“On the other hand, it is no less obvious that the tactics of the Mensheviks are pre-eminently the tactics of the artisan workers and peasant semi-proletarians, the tactics of those districts where the class contradictions are not quite clear and the class struggle is masked. *Menshevism is the tactics of the semi-bourgeois elements of the proletariat.*

“And this is not hard to understand. One cannot speak seriously to the Lodz, Moscow or Ivanovo-Voznesensk workers about blocs with the very liberal bourgeoisie whose members are fighting them tooth and nail, ‘punishing’ them again and again with partial dismissals and mass lock-outs. There Menshevism will find no sympathy, there Bolshevism, the tactics of uncompromising proletarian class struggle, is needed. And, vice versa, it is extremely difficult to inculcate the idea of class struggle among the peasants of Guria or, say, the artisans of Shklov, who do not feel the heavy, systematic blows of the class struggle and who are therefore willing to enter into all

\* *Ibid.*

sorts of agreements against the 'common enemy.' '\* (My italics.—L.B.)

*Comrade Stalin exposed the liquidationism of the Mensheviks and the Menshevik idea of a non-party labour congress.*

"The idea of a labour congress, taken in its concrete form, is inherently false, since it is not based upon facts, but upon the erroneous postulate that 'we have no party.' The point is that we do have a proletarian party that speaks only too loudly about its existence, that is felt only too keenly by the enemies of the proletariat—the Mensheviks themselves know this very well—and just because we already have such a party, the idea of a labour congress is utterly false."\*\*

Comrade Stalin proved that the idea of calling a labour congress was downright treason to the working class on the part of the Mensheviks, who, "by order" of the liberal bourgeoisie, were striving to disband the revolutionary party of the working class and thereby to behead the labour movement.

Comrade Stalin wrote:

"It is not for nothing that all the bourgeois writers, from the syndicalists and Socialist-Revolutionaries to the Cadets and Octobrists, express themselves so heartily in favour of a labour congress: they are all enemies of our Party, and the practical work of convening a labour congress would weaken and disorganize the Party considerably—how can they fail to welcome 'the idea of a labour congress'?"\*\*\*

In the same articles, Comrade Stalin sums up the results of the Fifth Congress and gives a general estimation of the work of the Congress, defining its place in the history of our Party.

To quote Comrade Stalin:

"The Congress closed with the victory of 'Bolshevism,' with the victory of revolutionary Social-Democracy over the opportunist wing of our Party—over 'Menshevism.' . . ."\*\*\*\*

The Congress summed up "the actual victories of the Party over the opportunist Central Committee, victories which have filled the whole of the past year's history of the internal development of our Party. . . .

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Ibid.*, No. 2, July 10, 1907.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*

\*\*\*\* *Ibid.*

“Actual unification of the advanced workers of all Russia into a single all-Russian party under the banner of revolutionary Social-Democracy—this is the significance of the London Congress, this is its general character.”\*

Such, in 1907, was Comrade Stalin's estimation of the significance of the Fifth (London) Party Congress.

Nevertheless, a number of comrades committed gross distortions in their writings on the London Congress.

Comrade Ph. Makharadze, for instance, plainly underestimates the significance and meaning of the Fifth (London) Party Congress when he writes:

“And no unity congress could unite them other than by one of these factions relinquishing all its fundamental views, which was entirely out of the question. Therefore the next, general (London) Party congress in 1907 and our last Caucasian congress in the beginning of 1908 were only a sheer waste of time. These two congresses were the last joint congresses. The Party was finally and irrevocably split, and all the subsequent repeated attempts to find common ground were foredoomed to failure.”\*\*

According to Makharadze it would appear that the Bolsheviks went to the London Party Congress for the purpose of actually amalgamating with the Mensheviks. And since no such union took place, Ph. Makharadze declares the Fifth (London) Party Congress “a sheer waste of time.”

In the first place, it is known that Lenin and the other Bolsheviks did not attend the Fifth (London) Party Congress nor the Fourth (Stockholm) Unity Congress for the purpose of uniting with the Mensheviks, but in order to expose the Mensheviks, to show the working class that the Mensheviks were opportunists and traitors to the cause of the revolution, and to rally the majority of the working class around the Bolsheviks.

In the second place, the Bolsheviks never counted on finding common ground with the Mensheviks, but always fought consistently against Menshevism and against conciliation with it. The “unity” tactics served as an extremely valuable means of exposing and isolating the Menshevik leaders and of winning away from

\* *Ibid.*, No. 1, June 20, 1907.

\*\* Ph. Makharadze, “On the History of the Communist Party in Transcaucasia,” in the symposium *Twenty-Five Years of Struggle for Socialism*, p. 205.

them the workers whom they had deceived. Therefore, the Fifth Party Congress was not a sheer waste of time but a great victory of Bolshevism over Menshevism, a victory which furthered the cause of uniting the advanced workers into a single revolutionary proletarian party under the banner of Leninism.

During the years of reaction, the Baku Bolsheviks, headed by Comrade Stalin, led the class struggles of the Baku proletariat and successfully carried out a big campaign around the conference with the oil magnates (at the end of 1907).

The oil magnates tried to call the conference in order to completely alienate the workers at the derricks from those in the shops, to corrupt the latter entirely, to infect them with slavish trust in the oil magnates and to replace the no-compromise principle of struggle against capital by the "principle" of bargaining and servile begging.

In his article, "Boycott the Conference," signed Ko—Comrade Stalin characterized the two periods of the struggle of the Baku workers as follows:

"The first period is the period of the struggle up to recent times, when the leading parts were played by the shop workers, when the oil field workers artlessly and trustfully followed the shop workers as their leaders, when the oil field workers were not yet aware of their great role in production. The tactics of the oil magnates at that time can be described as the tactics of flirting with the shop workers, the tactics of making systematic concessions to the shop workers and systematically ignoring the oil field workers.

"The second period opens with the awakening of the oil field workers, with their independent appearance on the stage and the simultaneous relegation of the shop workers to the background. . . . The oil magnates try to take advantage of the changed situation, and alter their tactics. They no longer flirt with the shop workers, they no longer try to placate the shop workers, because they know full well that now the oil field workers will no longer follow them always. On the contrary, the oil magnates try to provoke the shop workers to go on strike without the oil field workers in order to demonstrate thereby the relative impotence of the shop workers and to bring them to heel."\*

The Baku Bolsheviks launched a big campaign of political enlightenment among the working masses, and through the boycott

\* *Gudok*, No. 4. September 29, 1907.

of the conference switched the struggle of the workers onto the track of class-conscious political struggle against tsarism and the bourgeoisie.

Comrade Stalin based the boycott of the conference on the following grounds:

"Attendance at the conference means strengthening instead of eradicating the 'baksheesh' prejudices in the minds of the masses; it means imbuing the minds of the masses with trust in the oil magnates instead of mistrust; it means throwing the oil field workers into the clutches of the capitalists instead of rallying them around the shop workers and bringing them closer to the shop workers."\*

Comrade Stalin decried the Mensheviks' attempt to champion participation in the conference "at any price" on the plea that it could be utilized for the purpose of "organizing the masses."

"It is just the point, that to organize (in our sense of the word, of course, not as Gapon's followers understand it) means first of all to develop an awareness of the irreconcilable antagonism between the capitalists and the workers." \*\*

Hence the Bolshevik tactics of boycotting the conference were the only correct tactics, for

". . . the boycott tactics are the best means of developing an awareness of the irreconcilable antagonism between the workers and the oil magnates.

"The boycott tactics rally the oil field workers around the shop workers, by dispelling the 'baksheesh' prejudices and alienating the oil field workers from the oil magnates.

"The boycott tactics, by inspiring mistrust against the oil magnates, best emphasize, in the eyes of the masses, the necessity for struggle as the only means of improving life. . . .

"We must launch a boycott campaign: hold factory meetings, draw up demands, elect delegates to make the best formulation of general demands, distribute the demands in printed form, explain them, take them back to the masses for final approval, etc., etc., and all this must be done under the slogan of a boycott, so that when the general demands have been popularized, the 'legal opportunities' can be utilized—the

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Ibid.*

conference boycotted, made a laughing stock of, and the necessity of struggle for the best demands thereby emphasized.”\*

The Bolsheviks conducted the boycott of the conference under the slogan: “*A conference with guarantees, or no conference at all.*”

Boycotting the old backstage conferences of the Shendrikov type from which the workers were excluded, the Bolsheviks declared that the workers should agree to the conference only on condition that the working masses and their unions be allowed to participate freely in the entire proceedings of the conference. They proposed the following conditions on behalf of the workers:

- “1) Free discussion of their demands;
- “2) Freedom of assembly for the future council of representatives;
- “3) The right to avail themselves of the services of their unions;
- “4) A free choice of the opening date of the conference.”\*\*

These tactics were applied by the Bolsheviks in a struggle against the Menshevik line for a conference without guarantees, a “conference at any price,” and in a struggle against the Socialist-Revolutionary and Dashnak standpoint for “a boycott at any price.”

As a result of this struggle, the great majority of the Baku workers followed the Bolsheviks. Of 35,000 workers questioned only 8,000 voted for the tactics of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Dashnaks (unconditional boycott), 8,000 voted for the tactics of the Mensheviks (unconditional conference), while 19,000 voted for the tactics of the Bolsheviks (conference with guarantees).

After this great victory of the Bolsheviks at the end of 1907, meetings of the representatives of the oil fields and plants began, at which the demands to be presented to the oil magnates were drawn up. The overwhelming majority of the elected representatives were on the side of the Bolsheviks. During the period of rampant reaction in Russia, a workers’ parliament sat in Baku for about two weeks, with the Bolshevik worker, Comrade Tronov, presiding. In this parliament the Bolsheviks worked out the demands of the workers and carried on widespread propaganda for their minimum program.

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Bakinsky Proletary*, No. 5, “The Conference and the Workers.”

Dismayed by the workers' demands, the tsarist government and the oil magnates had the conference called off, thus manifesting solidarity with the tactics of the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Dashnaks. The tactics of the Bolsheviks, as always, proved the only correct tactics.

*In January and February 1908, the Baku Committee, headed by Comrade Stalin, led a series of big strikes notable for the fact that the workers passed from petty-bourgeois demands (bonuses, etc.) to proletarian demands.* As a result of the painstaking and persistent work of the Bolsheviks, the passivity of the oil field workers became a thing of the past, the strikes at the Nobel, Adamov, Mirzoyev and other oil fields bore an organized, militant, political character. Defensive strikes for partial demands became an important factor in cementing the unity of the proletariat.

During his work in Baku Comrade Stalin was arrested and sentenced to exile many times. The tsarist secret police dogged him tenaciously. One of Comrade Stalin's arrests took place in March 1908. Of the numerous police records of Comrade Stalin's activity, I will cite a few passages from the documents of the gendarmerie headquarters.

*First:*

"In compliance with the request from Police Headquarters of September 30, ult., No. 136706, the Caucasian District Secret Service Department reports that according to the information of the chief of the Baku Secret Service Department, 'Soso,' who escaped from Siberia and is known in the organization as 'Koba,' has been identified as Oganess Vartanov Totomyants, a resident of the city of Tiflis in whose name he has a passport, No. 982, issued by the Tiflis superintendent of police on May 12 of this year and valid for one year. . . .

"Of the people named 'Totomyants'—'Koba' (also reported to be known as 'Molochny') is at the head of the Baku organization of the R.S.D.L.P.; two others are members of the same organization in the Bibi-Eibat district. They are under constant secret surveillance, and in some cases open surveillance and are all marked for arrest when the preparations for breaking up the indicated organization are completed." \*

\* From the Report of the Chief of the Tiflis Province Gendarmerie, October 24, 1909, No. 13702. Material from the Central Party Archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, File No. 430.



*Second:*

"Jugashvili is a member of the Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., known in the organization under the alias of 'Koba.' . . . In view of his stubborn participation, despite all administrative penalties, in the activity of the revolutionary parties in which *he has always occupied extremely prominent positions*, and in view of his escape on two occasions from the locality of his exile, as a result of which he has not served a single one of his terms of exile, I would suggest recourse to a stricter measure of punishment—exile to the most remote districts of Siberia for *five years*.'"\*

*Third:*

"On March 24, 1910, Captain Martynov reports that a member of the Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. 'known in the organization as "Koba" and a most active Party official, occupying a leading position,' has been arrested.'"\*\*

*Fourth:*

On May 17, 1912, under Reference No. 108/S, the Caucasian District Secret Police Department wrote to the Chief of Police at Headquarters in St. Petersburg:

" 'Soso' is the Party pseudonym of Joseph Vissarionovich Jugashvili, a peasant from the village of Didi-Lilo, in the County of Tiflis, who is also known by the Party name of 'Koba.' He has been known since 1902 as one of the most active Social-Democratic functionaries. In 1902 he was brought before the Tiflis Province Gendarmerie Department for investigation in connection with the case of the 'secret circle of the R.S.D.L.P. in Tiflis,' for which he was exiled to Eastern Siberia for three years under open police surveillance, whence, however, he escaped and was sought by Police Headquarters through a 'wanted' circular. Later Jugashvili headed the Batum, Tiflis and Baku Social-Democratic organizations at various times; he was repeatedly searched and arrested but escaped from custody and went into hiding to evade exile. At the present time he is wanted by the police as per Police Headquarters circular No. 89008/189, art. 23320, of April 5, 1912. According to information received on the 6th ult. from

\* From the Report of Captain Galimbatovsky on the arrest of Joseph Vissarionov Jugashvili, March 24, 1910. *Loc. cit.*

\*\* *Ibid.*

agents in the district, Jugashvili has been in the city of Tiflis recently. At the same time the Chief of the Secret Police Department of Baku has been confidentially informed that 'Koba' was appointed to the Russian Central Committee by the Party. . . and left for St. Petersburg on March 30, concerning which Lt. Colonel Martynov reported to your Excellency on April 6 under File No. 1379 and informed the chief of the St. Petersburg Secret Service Department the same day under File No. 1378.'\*\*

Comrade Stalin was confined in the Baku prison from March 25 to the end of September 1908. He succeeded in establishing connections from prison with the Baku Committee and guided its work; he also directed the newspaper *Bakinsky Rabochy* from prison.

In his reminiscences of this period P. Sakvarelidze says the following about the work of Comrade Stalin:

"Special note must be made of Comrade Stalin's term in the Baku (Bailov) prison. All the Bolsheviki united around him. . . .

"Debates were constantly being organized in the commune of political prisoners, at which questions of the revolution, democracy and socialism were discussed. In most cases the debates were organized on the initiative of the Bolsheviki. Comrade Stalin often spoke at these meetings on behalf of the Bolshevik fraction, sometimes as main speaker, sometimes as opponent. . . . Comrade Stalin and his comrades had to direct the work of the organization from prison. The Bolshevik fraction was able to establish connections with the Baku organization, from which it used to receive exact information on the current work and to which it gave advice and instructions. . . . It must also be pointed out here that Comrade Stalin directed the publication of the newspaper *Bakinsky Rabochy*, the organ of the Baku organization, from prison. On one occasion the entire copy for the newspaper was prepared in the Baku prison—this was for the second number of the *Bakinsky Rabochy*.'"\*\*

In the autumn of 1908 Comrade Stalin was exiled from Baku to Solvychevodsk, Vologda Province, whence he escaped in the summer of 1909. He returned to Baku and resumed his energetic

\* Tbilisi Branch of the M.E.L.I., Folio 31, File 80.

\*\* From the Reminiscences of P. Sakvarelidze.

efforts to strengthen the Bolshevik organizations of Transcaucasia.

Comrade Stalin spoke regularly at district and inter-district Party meetings, and led the work of preparing and conducting strikes. He further developed the relentless struggle to expose and defeat the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Dashnaks and other petty-bourgeois parties.

In October 1909 Comrade Stalin arrived in Tiflis, organized and directed the struggle of the Tiflis Bolshevik organizations against the Menshevik-Liquidators.

Comrade Stalin prepared the ground for the calling of the Tiflis Bolshevik Party Conference and the publication of the Bolshevik newspaper *Tiflisky Proletary* (*Tiflis Proletarian*).

The Tiflis Bolshevik Conference took place in November 1909 and worked along the lines of Comrade Stalin's recommendations—to carry on the fight on two fronts.

The Conference unequivocally censured the Menshevik-Liquidators and the Otzovists, censured the Menshevik-Liquidator Regional Committee and passed a resolution to call a Transcaucasian general Party congress.

The first number of the *Tiflisky Proletary* published a leading article by Comrade Stalin in which he forecast a revival of the labour movement and urged that the illegal organizations of the Party had to be made stronger.

Comrade Stalin wrote:

“The great Russian revolution is not dead—no, it is alive!—it has merely retreated and is gathering forces for mighty action in the future.

“For the prime movers of the revolution, the proletarians and peasants, are alive and unscathed, and they will not, cannot, relinquish their vital demands. . . .

“We are living on the eve of new explosions, we are confronted with the old problem of overthrowing the power of the tsar. . . .

“It is our duty, the duty of the advanced workers, to be in good trim for the glorious impending battles for the republic, for the rights of the proletariat.

“It is up to us, the advanced workers, and only us, as in 1905, to lead the revolution and to direct it onto the path to complete victory. . . .

“It is up to us, the advanced workers, and only us, as in 1905, to rally the peasants around the revolutionary demands. . . .

"All this needs a united and strong party able to undertake the preparation of all the living forces of the proletariat for the impending battles. . . .

"And so, to work, comrade reader, to concerted effort in training the forces of the Tiflis proletariat for the impending decisive action!"\*

*In 1909-10 Comrade Stalin completely exposed the liberal-bourgeois, Zemstvo tactics of the Menshevik Liquidators.*

The *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 11, of February 13, 1910, printed an article by Comrade Stalin entitled "Letter from the Caucasus," in which he pointed out that the projected local self-government bodies for the oil district would be "an arena of acute conflicts between labour and capital" and that the Baku Committee had decided

"... to utilize the projected local self-government bodies, in the sense of participating in them for the purpose of carrying on agitation for the general economic needs of the workers and strengthening their organization."\*\*

The Bolshevik organization agreed to participate in the local self-government bodies for the oil districts, demanding

"... an equal number of workers' votes in the local self-government bodies, emphasizing that the struggle within the local self-government bodies can be of effect only in so far as it is supported by a struggle outside of these bodies and serves the interests of that struggle."\*\*\*

What is meant by subordinating participation in the local self-government bodies to the struggle outside becomes clear when Comrade Stalin says:

"... While pointing out that universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage is an indispensable prerequisite for the free development of local self-government and the free manifestation of the existing class contradictions, the Baku Committee emphasizes the necessity of overthrowing the tsarist government and calling a National Constituent Assembly, as a preliminary condition for the establishment of consistently democratic local self-government."\*\*\*\*

\* *Tiflisky Proletary*, No. 1, January 5, 1910.

\*\* Stalin, "Letter from the Caucasus," in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 11, February 13, 1910.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*

\*\*\*\* *Ibid.*

In the same "Letter from the Caucasus," which is devoted to an analysis of the position of the Party organization, Comrade Stalin raises the question of calling a Party conference and organizing the publication of an all-Russian Party newspaper in Russia. Comrade Stalin wrote:

"Isolation from the Party, the complete lack of information on affairs of the Party organizations in Russia, is having a bad effect on the Party membership. An all-Russian publication, regular general Party conferences and regular circuit tours by members of the C.C. might help matters. Of the decisions of a general organizational character adopted by the Baku Committee the most important are the two concerning a general Party conference and an all-Russian publication. Regarding the first question the B.C. considers it necessary to call a conference as soon as possible to settle urgent questions, mainly organizational. At the same time, the B.C. also considers a conference of Bolsheviks necessary to clear up the abnormal situation which has arisen within the fraction in recent months."\*

As is known this proposal of Comrade Stalin's met with a lively response and nine months after the appearance of his article, the first number of the newspaper *Zvezda* (*The Star*) was issued (December 16, 1910). At first the paper was organized as the joint publication of the Bolsheviks and Party-Mensheviks, but from the autumn of 1911 on, it became a Bolshevik organ exclusively.

At the end of 1909 the Baku proletariat was among the first in Russia to rise against the vicious offensive of capital.

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin preparation was made for a general strike, meetings of active Party and non-Party workers were held, general demands were drawn up, militant leaflets were published and distributed, etc.

In a leaflet of the Baku Committee on the fifth anniversary of the December strike of 1904, Comrade Stalin urged the Baku proletariat to take the offensive against the overbearing oil magnates.

The leaflet stated:

"Are we going to keep quiet much longer, is there no limit to our patience, is it not time we shattered the chains of criminal silence and raised the standard of a general economic strike for our vital demands?!! . . .

\* *Ibid.*

"Social-Democracy led us to victory in December 1904, it will also lead us to future victories through an organized general strike. . . .

*"Long live the impending general strike!*

*"Long live Social-Democracy!"*\*

Fighting to strengthen the Bolshevik organizations in Transcaucasia, Comrade Stalin revealed the treachery of the Georgian Mensheviks at every turn, using them as an example to expose the Liquidators of all Russia.

*In his historic articles, "Letters from the Caucasus" (1910), Comrade Stalin delivered a crushing blow to the Tiflis Menshevik-Liquidators, convicting them of abandoning the adopted program and tactics, and unmasking the Liquidator N. Jordania, the leader of the Georgian Mensheviks:*

"The programmatic exercises of our author,\*\* adopted by the Tiflis Mensheviks as a 'new' factional manifesto, mean the liquidation of the minimum program of the Party, a liquidation requiring the adaptation of our program to the program of the Cadets."\*\*\*

Comrade Stalin continued:

"Now everything is clear. For the triumph of the revolution it is necessary to have a moderate Cadet bourgeoisie with a moderate constitution. But it is incapable of winning alone, it needs the help of the proletariat. The proletariat must help it because the proletariat has no one, not even the peasantry, on whom it can rely, with the exception of the moderate bourgeoisie. But for this purpose it must abandon its irreconcilability, extend its hand to the moderate bourgeoisie and carry on a common fight for a moderate Cadet constitution. The rest will come of itself. The Party, which sees a guarantee of the victory of the revolution in the struggle of the workers and peasants against the moderate bourgeoisie and the feudal lords, is mistaken.

"In short, instead of the guiding role of the proletariat, leading the peasantry—the guiding role of the Cadet bourgeoisie, leading the proletariat by the nose.

\* Leaflet of the Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., "The December Strike and the December Agreement," issued December 13, 1909.

\*\* Reference is to N. Jordania, whose articles Comrade Stalin criticizes in "Letters from the Caucasus."

\*\*\* Supplement to *Sotsial-Demokrat*, June 24, 1910, Discussion Sheet, No. 2.

“Such are the ‘new’ tactics of the Tiflis Mensheviks.

“To analyse all this banal liberal trash is in our opinion unnecessary. It should only be noted that the ‘new’ tactics of the Tiflis Mensheviks mean the liquidation of the Party tactics that have been validated by the revolution, a liquidation requiring the transformation of the proletariat into an appendage of the moderate Cadet bourgeoisie.”\*

*Some of our comrades commit the serious error of vulgarizing and over-simplifying the question of the struggle against the Mensheviks of Georgia and of naively minimizing the role and the relative importance of the Mensheviks in Georgia.*

For instance, Ph. Makharadze has written:

“Menshevism in Georgia originated artificially, and had no strong foothold either at the time of the Soviets or even under the autocracy. The Menshevik Party was formed in our country quite artificially.”\*\*

In this statement Makharadze absolutely contradicts history and what Comrade Stalin wrote at the time in his “Letters from the Caucasus” on the relative importance of the Mensheviks in Georgia (Tiflis).

To quote Comrade Stalin:

“With respect to the development of industry, Tiflis is the direct opposite of Baku. Whereas Baku is of interest as the centre of the oil industry, Tiflis may be of interest only as the administrative, commercial and ‘cultural’ centre of the Caucasus. Altogether there are about 20,000 industrial workers in Tiflis, that is to say, less than soldiers and police. The only large enterprise is the railway shops (about 3,500 workers). As to the other enterprises they employ 200, 100, and in most cases from 20 to 40 workers each. But Tiflis is literally crowded with trading establishments and the ‘trading proletariat’ connected with them. Its poor connections with the big markets of Russia, ever lively and feverish, have put a stamp of stagnation upon Tiflis. The absence of sharp class conflicts, peculiar to big industrial centres only, transforms it into something in the nature of a bog waiting to be stirred up from without. This is precisely why Menshevism, genuine ‘Right’ Menshevism, has held out so long in Tiflis. Matters

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Rabochaya Pravda (Workers Truth)*, No. 130, 1923.

are quite different in Baku, where the clear-cut class stand taken by the Bolsheviks meets with lively response from the workers!

"Things which are 'self-evident' in Baku become clear in Tiflis only as a result of long discussion—the uncompromising speeches of the Bolsheviks are digested with great difficulty. It is just this that explains the Tiflis Bolsheviks' 'penchant' for discussions, and, on the other hand, the desire of the Mensheviks to 'be rid' of discussion as far as possible. But from what has been said it only follows that the work of the revolutionary Social-Democrats for the socialist education of the Tiflis proletariat will very often and inevitably take the form of an ideological struggle against Menshevism."\*

*Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia and Georgia, all through their history, carried on a fierce struggle against Menshevism as the principal enemy in the labour movement. At all stages of the history of the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia Comrade Stalin attacked and defeated the "legal Marxists," the Economists and the Menshevik-Liquidators, in true Leninist fashion. During the period of darkest reaction, as well as during the years of revolutionary revival, he built up and consolidated the Bolshevik Party organizations in a ruthless struggle against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.*

*During his work in Baku, in the period of reaction, Comrade Stalin made Baku a fortress of Bolshevism.*

The Party organization, led by Comrade Stalin, "lived right through the period of counter-revolution"\*\*\* and notwithstanding repressions, the reaction failed to smash it. Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Baku organization "took an extremely active part in everything that went on in the labour movement; in Baku it was a mass Party in the full sense of the word."\*\*\*

Comrade Stalin was arrested on March 23, 1910, and exiled to Solvychegodsk, a town in the Vologda Province.

During the years of reaction Lenin and Stalin persisted in the fight to revive and strengthen the Bolshevik Party and smash the Liquidator factions in the Russian Social-Democratic Party—the Mensheviks, Trotskyites and Otzovists.

\* Stalin, "Letter from the Caucasus," Discussion Sheet, No. 2, supplement to *Sotsial-Demokrat*, June 24, 1910.

\*\* S. Orjonikidze, "Report on the Meetings of the Russian Organizational Commission for the Convocation of a General Party Conference," in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 25, December 8, 1911.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*



Lenin and Stalin pursued a firm line of rallying all the revolutionary elements of Social-Democracy to revive the Party and defeat the Liquidators.

In the middle of 1909 Lenin presented a plan for a bloc with the Party Mensheviks who, with Plekhanov at their head, were opposed to the Liquidators and in favour of maintaining an illegal Social-Democratic Party.

In a letter from exile in Solvychevodsk (December 1910), Comrade Stalin wrote on the importance of a bloc between the Bolsheviks and the Party Mensheviks:

"In my opinion the line of a bloc (Lenin—Plekhanov) is the only proper one:

"1) It and it alone conforms to the real interests of the work in Russia, interests which require the solidarity of all real Party elements; 2) it and it alone will accelerate the process of freeing the legal organizations from the yoke of the Liquidators, driving a wedge between the workingmen Meks \* and the Liquidators, scattering the Liquidators and destroying them. The struggle for influence in the legal organizations is the need of the hour, a necessary stage on the road to the revival of the Party, and a bloc is the only means of cleansing organizations like this from the rubbish of Liquidationism. We can see Lenin's hand in the plan of the bloc—he is a clever fellow and knows what's what. But this does not mean that any bloc is good. Trotsky's bloc (he would say 'synthesis') is rank unprincipledness, a Manilov amalgam of motley principles, the helpless yearning of an unprincipled man for a 'good' principle. The logic of things is strictly a logic of principles by its nature and will not tolerate an amalgam." \*\*

The tactics of a united front with the Plekhanovites, formed on the basis of principles, made it easier to win over the workers who had been deceived by the Mensheviks to the side of the Bolsheviks.

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia pursued the tactics of a united front with the Party Plekhanovite-Mensheviks, maintaining the independence of their organization, steering clear of merging with the Mensheviks and without "mixing up the two parties."

\* Mek—short for Menshevik, as Bek was short for Bolshevik.

\*\* Stalin, "Letter from Exile in Solvychevodsk," *Bolshevik*, No. 1-2, p. 11, 1932.

The Bolsheviks did not forget for a moment that the Plekhanovites were still Mensheviks and that their opportunism had to be criticized and exposed.

Comrade Stalin warned the Bolsheviks against trustfulness in the Party Mensheviks.

In a letter from exile in Solvychevodsk Comrade Stalin wrote:

"It is very possible that in the course of work the Beks will break the Plekhanovites in, but this is only a possibility. To sit back and hope for such a result, however probable it may be, is in any case not what we should do. The more unitedly the Beks act, the more organized they are in action, the better the prospects of breaking them in. That is why we must keep all our irons in the fire."\*

The bloc which was formed in the Baku organization at the beginning of 1911 came nearest to success. On the initiative of the Bolsheviks the "Baku Executive Committee of the R.S.D.L.P." was formed (of the sixteen members, nine were Bolsheviks). At that time the Bolsheviks in the united committee were headed by Comrade Stepan Shaumyan. In August 1911 the Baku Party Mensheviks took part in the formation of the Russian Organization Commission, which was to call the Prague Conference. The bloc did not last long. In 1912 the Party Mensheviks swung over to the Liquidator bloc of the Mensheviks, Trotskyites and Otzovists and left the Baku Executive Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.

In the conditions of the new upsurge arising in the labour movement in Russia, the question of strengthening the Bolshevik Party and defeating the Liquidator-opportunist groups was a question of decisive importance for the revolutionary movement. In the first order of importance Lenin put the question of calling a Party conference which under the circumstances of the new revolutionary wave should determine the tactics to be adopted in order to prepare the second Russian revolution and purge the Party of Liquidator-Mensheviks and Trotskyites.

Lenin and Stalin organized a struggle for the convocation of a general Party conference.

While he was yet in exile Comrade Stalin wrote a letter to Lenin stressing the need to re-establish a Party centre in Russia:

"In my opinion," wrote Stalin, "our next job, brooking no delay, is the organization of a central (Russian) group which

\* *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

would combine illegal, semi-legal and legal work, to begin with in the main centres (St. Petersburg, Moscow, the Urals and the South). Call it what you will—the Russian part of the Central Committee' or 'an auxiliary group under the C.C.'—it makes no difference. But such a group is as necessary as air, as bread. At the present time uncertainty, solitude, isolation is rife among the local functionaries, everyone has thrown up his hands. This group, however, could revive the work, introduce co-ordination and clarity. And this would clear the way for a real utilization of legal possibilities. This, in my opinion, is the starting point for the revival of the Party spirit."\*

In June 1911, under Lenin's leadership, a conference of C.C. members was held, at which a decision was adopted to call a general Party conference and a foreign organization commission was appointed. Among the Bolsheviks nominated to the latter were Comrades J. Stalin, S. Spandaryan and P. Smidovich.

On the instructions of Lenin, Comrade Stalin did a tremendous amount of work in Russia for convening the general Party conference at Prague. At the beginning of July 1911 Comrade Stalin made his third escape from exile and arrived in St. Petersburg. In St. Petersburg Comrade Stalin organized and guided the struggle against the Liquidator-Mensheviks and Trotskyites, consolidated and strengthened the Bolshevik organizations of St. Petersburg.

Comrade Stalin's fight against the Liquidators in St. Petersburg was vividly reflected in Lenin's article "From the Camp of the Stolypin 'Labour Party' (Dedicated to Our 'Peace-Makers and Conciliators')."\*\*\*

In this article written on behalf of the editorial board of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* Lenin commented on Comrade Stalin's correspondence as follows:

"Comrade K.'s correspondence merits the utmost attention of all who hold our Party dear. A better exposure of *Golos* policy (and *Golos* diplomacy), a better refutation of the views and hopes of our 'peace-makers and conciliators' can hardly be imagined. . . .

"It is not always that these Liquidators come in contact with Party workingmen; it is very rare that the Party receives

\* *Ibid.*, p. 12.

\*\* Cf. *Sotsial-Demokrat*, September 1, 1911.

information on their shameful utterances as exact as that for which we must thank Comrade K., but the *group* of Independent-Legalists preach *always and everywhere* in this very spirit.”\*

In the summer of 1911, Comrade Stalin made numerous trips to Baku and Tiflis to organize the struggle for the convocation of an all-Russian conference.

The Tiflis Bolsheviks published a leaflet written by Comrade Stalin giving a clear picture of the upsurge of the revolutionary movement, and the task of restoring the illegal labour party and defeating the opportunist liquidator groups.

To quote the leaflet:

*“Comrades and Fellow Workers!*

“The political reaction that set in after the defeat of the Great People’s Revolution of 1905 has saddled the country with a terrible burden. The liberal bourgeoisie, taking fright at the independence displayed by the working class in the struggle for power, betrayed the cause of the people’s freedom and treacherously stretched out its hands to the tsarist autocracy in order to share political power with it behind the people’s back.

“The tsar of the landowners with his lackey ministers, relying on the old, tried measures of the enslavement and boundless exploitation of the masses: spies, jails, penal servitude and the gallows, began to fight for its existence with unparalleled cynicism and arrogance. The factory owners and manufacturers, utilizing the triumph of reaction, began to withdraw from the workers the concessions wrested from them in the days of the upsurge, and, with one accord, fell on the workers with lock-outs, black-lists, wage and rate reductions, and longer hours.

The tsar and the landowner and the Russian merchant, all thoroughly aware that their main enemy is the working class, realized that the historic role of the proletariat of Russia is to overthrow the tsarist autocracy and set up a democratic republic, this threshold to the complete triumph of the workers’ cause, the threshold to the radiant realm of free and joyous labour—socialism. And that, first and foremost, is why all the vengeance, all the persecutions, all the horrors of triumphant reaction descended upon the working class and its class party, ‘Russian Social-Democracy.’

\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, p. 217, Russ. ed.

"And this reaction, this triumph of counter-revolution, turned many away from the revolutionary cause; in these years many, very many, began to repudiate the former slogans, former beliefs and convictions. This process of 'moulting' was particularly marked among the intellectual groups.

"But the working class remained true to its revolutionary duty although it more than all others had to make sacrifices in the days of the struggle, more than all others had and still has to suffer privations in this hour of the triumph of black reaction. And no reaction, no persecutions can daunt or 'pacify' its ranks, since by reason of its position in modern society this class cannot but be revolutionary and must inevitably struggle, because in this struggle it has 'nothing to lose but its chains' and 'a world to win.'

"The temporary apathy, lassitude and quiescence were a result of the previous heroic efforts of the proletariat of Russia and the economic crisis which our country has passed through. At the present time, however, the difficult period for industry is passing, there are signs of a pick-up in economic life, the workers have begun to pull themselves together, they have felt an urge for political life, for revolutionary action. 'We must fight' is the slogan of the day; the necessity for struggle and its inevitability are acknowledged by all the class-conscious and advanced elements of the working class. And now the class-conscious proletariat is being confronted with the problem of the forms, immediate tasks and objects of the proletarian struggle, because the workers never take action, never take practical steps without first discussing the situation, without determining their line of conduct and their tactics.

"The working classes of the advanced countries have their own working class, political organization—the Social-Democratic Party, which pursues a class policy. And to us workers of Russia, after the revolution we have been through, the necessity of a class political organization has become even more obvious. We workers of Russia are faced with the great historic role of grave-diggers of tsarism. Recent revolutionary experience teaches us that we must make absolutely no deals with the bourgeoisie, that we must not shed our proletarian blood for some sort of 'constitutional guarantees,' but must raise the standard of a democratic republic from the very outset. We must fight until we have completely destroyed the tsarist power, in order to have a clear road to our ultimate goal—socialism. And if in the impending struggle we are to

be strong and have influence over the masses, if we are to lead them, we must have our own compact, strong and stable proletarian organization. However, it is clear that under the present political conditions we workers do not have the possibility of organizing in an open, legal party, and must have illegal, unlawful, *underground* work. And that is why no obstacles must stop us in the sacred cause of reviving our illegal labour party. At the same time, to extend and strengthen our influence we must utilize all legal opportunities too—open forms of labour organization—for our revolutionary ends. Everywhere, throughout Russia, class-conscious workers are untiringly accomplishing the hard, uphill task of restoring and strengthening the R.S.D.L.P. And we urge the local worker comrades to take part in this concerted and joint work together with the class-conscious workers of all Russia. Unfortunately, besides political stumbling-blocks, provocateurs and similar scoundrels, the advanced workers participating in our vital cause of strengthening our own Social-Democratic Party have to contend with a new obstacle in our own ranks, that is to say, people with a bourgeois psychology, people who, in our proletarian medium, are the agents of bourgeois influence on the working class. They fight against our illegal party, they want to abolish it completely (liquidate it); they do not want an independent labour party, they turn down our program, they strive to make the working class of Russia an understrapper to the bourgeoisie, to make cannon fodder of it for the Russian bourgeoisie.

“These gentlemen, headed by Potressov, that traitor to the workers’ cause, do not admit that the leader of the Russian revolution is the Russian proletariat; they want to commit the cause of the people’s freedom into the hands of its historical betrayer—the bourgeoisie. Instead of an illegal workers’ Social-Democratic party these gentlemen propose to form an open ‘Stolypin’ labour party, at the price of abandoning our ultimate purpose, at the price of abandoning our program together with our economic and political demands. These traitors propose to substitute our revolutionary struggle by supplications, petitions, ‘tearful entreaties’ to the ‘June Third’ Duma, the Black-Hundred-cum-Octobrist Duma, the gentlemen’s Duma, wholly ignoring our S.-D. deputies. But the class-conscious workers have turned away contemptuously from these bourgeois intellectuals who are trying to blast the labour party from within, and, following the dic-

tates of proletarian conscience and of revolutionary spirit, have once more turned to the building of the illegal party. And so, comrades and fellow workers, the time has come to buckle to with redoubled energy in the matter of preparing for new battles under the scarlet banner of our glorious old Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

"The sombre, bloody clouds of black reaction hovering over our country are beginning to break up, are beginning to give way to the thunder clouds of the people's anger and indignation. The grim background of our life is being rent by lightning and in the distance we already see the first flashes; the storm is approaching which will sweep from the face of the earth the age-old bulwark of violence and oppression—the throne of the tsar-executioner, the murderer of the people, the Russian despot, Nicholas the Last. The tsarist government which has summoned all the dark forces against the people's revolution and its leader, the working class, has fallen into the hands of these forces itself. Iliodor, the tsarina's half-demented monk, who incited the masses to take vengeance on the rich intellectuals, Bogrov, the provocateur and secret-service agent at whose feet lies the corpse of the omnipotent favourite, P. A. Stolypin—such is the pacification achieved by the counter-revolution whose hero was the fallen minister.

"Only a new revolution will lead Russia out of this situation onto the open road of further development. The emancipation of the country from political and economic fetters can be achieved only by the revolutionary populace led by the proletariat.

"Organize, comrades, in compact, illegal ranks into a single illegal labour party.

*"Down with Liquidationism!"*

*"Long Live the R.S.D.L.P.!"*

*"Live Live the New People's Revolution!"*

*"Down with the Autocracy!"*

*"Long Live the Democratic Republic!"*

*"Long Live Socialism!"*

"Leading Circle of the Tiflis Group of the R.S.D.L.P."

The *Sotsial-Demokrat* immediately commented on this leaflet, giving the gist of it and expressing the following opinion:

"The Leading Circle of the Tiflis Group of the R.S.D.L.P. has just issued a printed leaflet devoted to an evaluation of the

present situation. . . . The leaflet . . . clearly and sharply attacks the Liquidators. . . .

"The leaflet further proscribes Otzovism also. . . ."\*

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks organized the preparations for the Prague Conference in a decisive struggle against the Liquidators.

At this time, acting on Lenin's instructions, Sergo Orjonikidze arrived in Transcaucasia to assist in the preparations for the Prague Conference of the Party.

With the help and leadership of Comrade Stalin, Orjonikidze succeeded in establishing an organization commission in Baku for the convocation of the all-Russian Party conference.

The Baku and Tiflis Bolshevik organizations played a major part in the preparations for convening the Prague Conference.

*Lenin wrote that the Russian Organization Commission, which ensured the convocation of the Prague Conference, was "the work of the Kiev, Yekaterinoslav, Tiflis, Baku and Yekaterinburg organizations."\*\** (My italics.—L. B.)

The Sixth (Prague) Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. endorsed Lenin's strategic line in the Russian revolution, emphasizing that now as before the immediate task of the working class was to fight for a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry; it decided the Party's political slogans for the elections to the Fourth Duma and called upon the Party and the working class to intensify the struggle against the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie and their leader, the Cadet Party.

The Conference expelled the Liquidator-Mensheviks from the Party and also put the Trotskyites and the followers of *Vperyod* outside its ranks.

*The Prague Conference of the Bolsheviks marks a turning point in the history of Bolshevism, for it made the split with Menshevism official, expelled the Liquidator-Mensheviks from the Party and laid the foundation for the existence of the Bolshevik Party.*

The Prague Conference elected a Central Committee with Lenin at its head. Comrade Stalin was also elected, although he was not present.

During the Prague Party Conference Comrade Stalin was in exile. Comrade Stalin had been arrested in St. Petersburg on Sep-

\* *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 24, October 18, 1911.

\*\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, "The Anonymous Writer of the *Vorwärts* and the Situation in the R.S.D.L.P.," p. 429, Russ. ed.



tember 9, 1911, and exiled to Solvychevodsk in the Vologda Province, but he managed to escape on February 29, 1912.

On Lenin's proposal, the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) elected at the Prague Conference set up a bureau of the C.C., headed by Comrade Stalin, to lead Party work in Russia. Besides Comrade Stalin there were on this bureau Comrades Y. Sverdlov, S. Spandaryan, S. Orjonikidze and M. Kalinin.

After the Prague Conference, Comrade Stalin returned to Transcaucasia (Baku and Tiflis), and organized and directed the struggle of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks for carrying out the decisions of the Prague Conference.

In March 1912, the Tiflis Bolshevik organization heard a report on the work of the Prague Conference and approved its decisions.

The resolution of the Tiflis Bolshevik group stated:

“Recognizing:

“1) That whereas the Party organizations in the country had been scattered and disorganized during the past few years, the recent Conference gathered together, as far as possible, all functioning Party nuclei, and thus laid the foundation for the amalgamation and consolidation of all Party organizations;

“2) That by establishing a Russian centre (C.C.), the Conference took the right road towards the unification of the Party, since the lack of such a practical leading centre reacted disastrously on Social-Democratic work;

“3) That all the decisions adopted by the Conference, both in regard to the political line of the Social-Democratic proletariat and in regard to organizational structure, quite correctly indicate the line of conduct for the proletariat—

“The Tiflis group of the R.S.D.L.P. registers its complete adherence to them and will support the C.C. in its constructive work.”\*

In April 1912 the Tiflis Bolshevik organization came out against the Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., which was led by the Menshevik-Liquidators. It characterized the Transcaucasian Conference, which was being called on the initiative of the Regional Committee, as a Liquidationist conference, and called upon the Social-Democratic organizations to boycott it. It is a known fact that the Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the Mensheviks set itself the aim of thwarting the decisions of the Bolshevik Prague Conference.

\* *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 26, May 8, 1912, p. 9.

The resolution of the Bolshevik group (April 1912) stated:

“We regard the Conference being called by the January meeting\* as a Liquidationist and inaugural\*\* conference, since the initiating groups, which work legally and which on their own authority declare themselves to be Social-Democratic, are being invited to it also. This openly contradicts the principles on the basis of which all previous general Party congresses and conferences have been called. The work of convening this conference is disorganizing the Party, which has just begun to rally round the Central Committee, and therefore we categorically refuse to participate in this conference and call upon all Social-Democratic organizations to boycott it.”\*\*\*

In 1912 Comrade Stalin was in charge of the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) and did a tremendous amount of Party work in St. Petersburg.

Comrade Stalin directed the newspaper *Zvezda* (*The Star*), which published his articles “A New Page,” “Life Wins,” “How They Are Preparing for the Elections,” “A Start,” “Conclusions,” and others.

In these articles Comrade Stalin analysed the impending phase of revival in the labour movement in Russia and explained what the Bolshevik Party should do next.

On the basis of Lenin’s instructions and under Comrade Stalin’s personal leadership the *Pravda* was founded—that splendid militant organ of the Bolshevik Party.

The *Pravda* was a newspaper of tremendous political and organizational importance. In the period of the struggle against the Liquidators to maintain the illegal side of the movement and to win over the legal labour organizations, the *Pravda* was an organizational centre rallying the workingclass around the illegal Bolshevik Party.

The Bolshevik campaign in the elections to the Fourth Duma was conducted in accordance with Lenin’s instructions from abroad and directed personally by Comrade Stalin. The Bolsheviks won a complete victory in the election of labour deputies to the Fourth Duma. Stalin’s “St. Petersburg Workers’ Mandate to Their Labour Deputy” rallied the working class to Lenin’s colours in the elections.

\* The meeting of “Nationals” in January 1912, in preparation for the August Conference of the Liquidators.

\*\* I.e., a conference intended to form a new Party.—*Ed. Eng. ed.*

\*\*\* Central Archives, Georgia, Folio No. 7, File No. 2467, 1913, Sheet 48 (reverse)-49, “Case of Stassova and Others.”

Of the "Mandate" Comrade Stalin wrote:

"The Mandate speaks primarily of the problems of 1905, of the fact that these problems are still unsolved, that the economic and political situation in the country makes their solution imperative. The emancipation of the country, according to the Mandate, can be achieved only by a struggle, a struggle on two fronts: against the feudal-bureaucratic survivals on the one hand, and against the treacherous liberal bourgeoisie on the other. Moreover, only the peasantry can be a reliable ally of the workers. But the struggle can be victorious only on condition that the proletariat has the hegemony (leading part). The greater the understanding and organization of the workers, the better they will play the part of leader of the people. And since the Duma platform is, under the present conditions, one of the best means of organizing and educating the masses, the workers are sending a deputy to the Duma so that he and the whole S.-D. fraction in the Fourth Duma as well should defend the fundamental aims of the proletariat, the complete and uncurtailed demands of the country. . . .

"Such are the contents of the Mandate."\*

Defeated and disgraced in the St. Petersburg elections of labour deputies, the Liquidators raised a howl about the impermissible split which they alleged was being effected by the Bolsheviks. Comrade Stalin showed what these hypocritical cries for "unity" were worth.

"When bourgeois diplomats are preparing a war they begin to shout loudly about 'peace' and 'friendly relations.' . . . Fine words are a mask for dirty deeds. A sincere diplomat is dry water, wooden iron.

"The same applies to the Liquidators with their fake cries for unity. . . . The Liquidators are deceiving the workers with their diplomatic cries for unity, because while they are talking unity they are creating a split. . . .

"The elections in St. Petersburg are outright proof of this."\*\*

Comrade Stalin gave an excellent definition of the Marxist understanding of unity in the labour movement.

\* K. St., "The Will of the Delegates," *Pravda*, No. 147, October 19, 1912.

\*\* K. Stalin, "The Elections in St. Petersburg," *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 30, January 12, 1913.

“Unity is, first of all, unity of action of the Social-Democratically organized workers within the working class, which is as yet unorganized, as yet unenlightened by the rays of socialism. The Social-Democratically organized workers raise questions at their meetings, discuss them, adopt decisions and then, as one whole, come to the non-Party people with these decisions, which are absolutely binding on the minority.

*Without this there is not and cannot be any unity of Social-Democracy! . . .*

“Then, unity is unity of action of the proletariat in the face of the whole bourgeois world. The representatives of the proletariat adopt decisions and carry them out, acting as one whole, with the minority subordinate to the majority. *Without this there is not and cannot be any unity of the proletariat!*”\*

In the same article Comrade Stalin showed up the Liquidationist essence of the “unity” slogans of Judas Trotsky, who tried to cover up his Liquidationism with “revolutionary” phrases about unity.

In his article “The Elections in St. Petersburg” Comrade Stalin wrote.

“They say that Trotsky with his ‘unity’ campaign has put a ‘new current’ into the old ‘affairs’ of the Liquidators. But this is not true. Despite his ‘heroic’ efforts and ‘terrible threats’ Trotsky proved in the end to be just a loud-mouthed champion with fake muscles, for after five years of ‘work’ he did not succeed in uniting anybody but the Liquidators. New fuss—old affairs.”\*\*

In his article “The Results of the Elections in the Workers’ Curia of St. Petersburg,” Comrade Stalin wrote:

“Trotsky . . . lumps everyone together, opponents and supporters of Party organization alike, and, of course, he gets no unity whatever. . . .

“The practical experience of the movement shatters Trotsky’s childish plan of uniting the un-unitable.

“Moreover. From a preacher of fantastic unity Trotsky is becoming a factotum of the Liquidators, carrying on a business that is of advantage to the Liquidators.

\* *Ibid.*

\*\* *Ibid.*

"Trotsky has done all that is possible for us to have two rival newspapers, two rival platforms, two conferences which repudiate each other—and now this champion with the fake muscles himself is singing to us about unity!

"This is no unity, but a game fit for a comedian."\*

V.I. Lenin warmly supported the struggle which Comrade Stalin developed around the election campaign in the pages of *Pravda*.

After reading Stalin's "Who Won?" in *Pravda* of October 18, 1912, summing up the elections in St. Petersburg, Lenin wrote to the editors:

"Today I read in *Pravda* . . . about the results of the elections in the workers' curia of St. Petersburg. I cannot refrain from congratulating you on the editorial in No. 146: in a moment of defeat dealt not by Social-Democrats (it is clear from an analysis of the figures that the Liquidators did not get in on Social-Democrat votes), the editors at once adopted the correct, firm, dignified tone of pointing to the significance of the principled standpoint of protest against 'humiliation.' . . .

"It is extremely important not to break off the work begun by *Pravda* of studying the elections, but to continue it. . . .

"Only *Pravda* can do this important job properly."\*\*

During 1912 and 1913, conciliation towards the Menshevik-Liquidators and the opportunist practice of uniting and collaborating with the Mensheviks were current to a certain extent in the ranks of the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia and Georgia.

After the Prague Conference, which expelled the Liquidators from the Party and put a final end to all survivals of formal unification with the Mensheviks, some Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia violated this policy and adopted the line of collaboration with the Menshevik-Liquidators.

Thus, for instance, in 1912-13, in Kutais, people like Eliava, Zhgenti, M. Okujava\*\*\* and G. Kuchaidze collaborated with the Mensheviks, belonged to the same organization as they did, worked on the Menshevik newspaper *Mertsikhali*,\*\*\*\* etc.

\* *Pravda*, No. 151, October 24, 1912.

\*\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIX, "To the Editors of *Pravda*," p. 76, Russ. ed.

\*\*\* In 1937 M. Okujava, S. Eliava and T. Zhgenti were exposed as enemies of the people.

\*\*\*\* *Mertsikhali* (*The Swallow*)—a legal Menshevik newspaper published in Georgian in Kutais beginning with December 11, 1912. Altogether 16 numbers appeared in 1912, and 101 numbers in 1913.

In their articles and reminiscences T. Zhgenti, B. Bibineishvili\* and others maintained silence about the great historical significance of the struggle of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks against the Menshevik-Liquidators, the struggle of the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia, and primarily of the Baku and Tiflis organizations, under the leadership of Comrades Stalin, Orjonikidze and Spandaryan, for the preparation of the Prague Conference and the carrying out of its decisions. In place of the struggle to smash the Menshevik-Liquidators completely, they substituted peace and the united front of a small group of Bolshevik-conciliators (to which they themselves belonged) with the Mensheviks.

Is it not clear that Zhgenti and Bibineishvili slandered the Bolsheviks of Georgia and unceremoniously falsified and distorted the history of our Party?

In 1913 serious mistakes were also made by Ph. Makharadze, who was then in charge of the magazine *Chveni Tskaro*\*\* (appearing in the city of Baku).

Prior to Makharadze, Noah Jordania had been editor of this magazine.

In his articles, N. Jordania advanced and propagated the thesis of the necessity for a fusion of Bolshevism and Menshevism on the basis of the principles of Menshevism, i.e., in essence advocated the slogan of the liquidation of Bolshevism.

At that time he wrote:

"One thing only is beyond doubt, namely, that these two currents are two wings of one and the same movement, two aspects of one and the same phenomenon. They complement each other, each representing a continuation of the other."\*\*\*

Noah Jordania held up the Social-Democratic Parties of the West as worthy models of working-class parties, saying:

"We see great splits and different trends in the workers' parties of Western Europe. There are even some that completely repudiate the basic principles of Marxism. Irrespective of this, they are in one party, they march and fight together.

\* In 1937 B. Bibineishvili was exposed as an enemy of the people.

\*\* *Chveni Tskaro (Our Fountain-Head)*—a monthly Social-Democratic magazine of a Liquidationist tendency. It began to appear in 1913 after the suppression of *Tskaro* in Baku.

\*\*\* *Tskaro (Fountain-Head)*, No. 9, 1913, p. 2. This was a weekly Social-Democratic magazine of avowedly Liquidationist tendency. It was published in the Georgian language in Baku in 1913.

But with us, when differences of opinion were still superficial, split and division became the aim from the very start.”\*

Jordania made a brazen and cynical attack on Marx. He wrote:

“When Marx wanted to arrange Party affairs in his own way from London, and wrote to his disciples, Liebknecht and Bebel, not to unite with the Lassalleans, the disciples hid this letter, carried through the unification and answered Marx: We on the spot are better able to see the need for union. And if a thinker of genius, divorced from local affairs, makes mistakes, what shall we say about others, who send instructions from afar and wrap themselves in a cloak of infallibility, like the Pope of Rome?”\*\*

Beginning with the twelfth issue of *Tskaro* Ph. Makharadze became its editor.

Instead of rooting out the Menshevik spirit of the magazine and waging an uncompromising struggle against Jordania, Makharadze gave him the opportunity of collaborating on the magazine and further propagating his Menshevik views.

In a number of articles published in the magazine *Chveni Tskaro* under the editorship of Makharadze, N. Jordania (cf. “An Inner-Party Misunderstanding” and other articles) defended and propagated the thesis that Russian Menshevism had the correct ideology and tactics, whereas Bolshevism had only a strong organization; that Bolshevism and Menshevism in Russia were complements of each other; that in contrast to Russian Menshevism, Transcaucasian Menshevism, which had not only ideological and tactical but also organizational merits, had liquidated Bolshevism.

Makharadze not only did not oppose the Menshevik-Liquidationist views of N. Jordania in his magazine (evidently in the interests of peace and collaboration with the Mensheviks), but committed a series of gross opportunist errors in his own articles.

In his article “An Inner-Party Disagreement” Makharadze wrote the following:

“Russian Social-Democracy has not been able to establish firm and inflexible discipline. And this is where we must look for the main reason of the split that exists in our Social-Democracy. . . .

\* *Ibid.*, p. 3.

\*\* *Ibid.*

"If discipline had been firmly established among us, would the appearance of 'Bolsheviks' and 'Mensheviks' within the Party and the corresponding division of the Party into two parts have been possible? . . . We are firmly convinced that if Russian Social-Democracy had had firm and strict discipline, so senseless a division as Bolshevism and Menshevism was at that time would have been wholly impossible; Social-Democracy would have been a single united party organizationally. This would in no way have hindered the existence of differences and even of disagreements within the Party, either in technical or organizational questions. Here we can point as an example to the German Social-Democratic Party, which organizationally is an integral unit, even though there are disagreements of various kinds within it. . . .

"The interests of the masses are everywhere the same; temporary disagreements can arise here only from a lack of class consciousness. True, in some instances this disagreement is introduced from above, in the interests of defending narrow factional views, but it is without foundation. The Social-Democratic Labour Party can exist only as a single party, otherwise it cannot exist at all. It is impossible to imagine the existence of both a Bolshevik and a Menshevik Social-Democratic Labour Party. That would be downright stupidity."\* (*Stir in the audience.*)

Need proof be given that such a conception of the Party is in glaring contradiction to Lenin's and Stalin's teaching on the proletarian party, that in championing the amalgamation of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, Makharadze was continuing the work of Kautsky and Trotsky, whose aim was to smash Bolshevism by advocating reconciliation between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks?

Makharadze declared that Lenin's historic struggle for the creation, development and strengthening of the Bolshevik Party was wholly unnecessary, as it brought harm to the revolutionary labour movement, and he considered the very existence of the Bolshevik Party "downright stupidity."

Failing to understand the momentous task of parting company with Menshevism and establishing a genuinely proletarian, Bolshevik Party, Makharadze took the Liquidators under his direct protection.

\* *Chveni Tskaro*, No. 7-17, 1913, pp. 5-6, "An Inner-Party Disagreement," Part II, signed "Dzyeli Dasseli."



In the same article Makharadze wrote:

"Here we must remark that in the Caucasus Liquidationism and Liquidationist deviations have always been slight, and no such fierce struggle raged around this issue as in Russia. . . .

"... The Liquidators were particularly strong in St. Petersburg, since it was there that their main forces were concentrated.

"... This campaign was carried on almost exclusively in St. Petersburg. Therefore in most cases the local workers did not even understand and still do not understand the fierce struggle against the Liquidators, which was carried on there by *Zvezda* and later by *Pravda*.

"... As we know, the backbone of the Liquidators was a group of journalists, of which Potressov, Martov, Dan, Levitsky, Mayevsky, and others were and still are members. Since all of them were formerly leaders of the Mensheviks, this fact gave rise to the misunderstanding that all Mensheviks must at the same time be Liquidators. Incidentally, this also explains why nearly all the Caucasian organizations were labelled Liquidationist, which is absurd in itself. This is how Liquidationism was understood among us and thus, in all probability, it is still understood. However, the case was not such."\*

Thus, in 1913, Ph. Makharadze, being a conciliator, shielded the Transcaucasian Menshevik-Liquidators and N. Jordania against the Bolsheviks. Makharadze saw the struggle of the Liquidators against the Party in St. Petersburg, but did not see or understand the struggle of the Liquidators, the struggle of Noah Jordania, against Bolshevism in the Transcaucasian organizations, underestimated this struggle, adopted a conciliatory attitude towards it and screened it.

In 1909 Comrade Stalin in his "Letter from the Caucasus" had already exposed the Liquidationism of Jordania and the Transcaucasian Mensheviks. Lenin had also given an estimate of Jordania's Liquidationism.

In a letter to Olminsky in 1913 Lenin wrote:

"The clever diplomat, An\*\*... is playing a *very subtle* game. You don't know An! But I have studied his diplomacy for years, and know how he deceives the *whole Caucasus*

\* *Ibid.*, No. 8-18, Part III, p. 7.

\*\* The pseudonym of Noah Jordania.

with it!! . . . An wants to make it appear that he is against *Luch*\* **AND THUS SAVE Luch!!** This is clear to those who know the history of the Party well, especially of *J a n u a r y* 1910 and *A u g u s t* 1912!! *An chided Dan for trifles, while surrendering to Dan on the main issue\*\** (the slogan\*\* of the struggle for an open party) as he wished to show 'his own people' that *w e t o o*, you see, are against the Liquidators. There is *no* more fatal mistake than to be caught by this bait of An's. You *do not know* the ins-and-outs of the attitude of Trotsky, An, the Bund, Braun, etc., towards *Luch* (and this is understandable)—but I do know. *There is no better way\*\* of a s s i s t i n g the Liquidators than by recognizing\*\* An as an anti-Liquidator.\*\** This is a fact. And An is their sole 'serious' *s u p p o r t*. This is also a fact. . . .

"P. S. They say that in St. Petersburg there is much talk about how An (together with Chkhenkeli) was 'taking away' *Luch* from Dan . . . but did not take it away. I believe he *pretended* to take it away, and wound up with *what seemed to be a compromise* but was in fact a surrender to Dan!! Dan is a battery of the enemy, poorly disguised. *An is also a battery of the same enemy, but cleverly camouflaged.*"\*\* (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, "Letter to Olminsky," p. 438, Russ. ed.)

Ph. Makharadze's statements concerning the anti-Liquidationism of the Caucasian Mensheviks could mean and did mean only one thing. Makharadze tried to justify his collaboration with Jordania, not understanding that "there is no better way of *assisting* the Liquidators than by recognizing *An* as an anti-Liquidator." (Lenin.)

In 1913 this conciliatory attitude towards Menshevism on the part of the above-mentioned small group of Bolsheviks developed into complete organizational amalgamation and collaboration with the Menshevik-Liquidators.

Contrary to the policy of Lenin and Stalin, a number of conciliators, including S. Eliava, T. Zhgenti and B. Bibineishvili, took part in the Transcaucasian Regional Conference of the Menshevik-Liquidators in the autumn of 1913.

The Regional Committee elected by the Conference included, in addition to the Liquidators, Comrade Ph. Makharadze and Shalva Eliava.

There is not a single word in the resolutions and communiqués

\* *Luch* (*The Ray*)—a newspaper of the Liquidators.

\*\* My italics.—L.B.

of this Conference on the struggle against the Liquidators, nor is there any mention of the Prague All-Russian Conference of Bolsheviks and the new C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. On the contrary, we find in the "Communiqué" of the Conference a call to rally around the Menshevik-Liquidationist Regional Committee.

"The Regional Committee appeals to all members of the Party to rally around it and the local leading bodies, and to work under their guidance for the consolidation of the Social-Democratic organizations and the strengthening of their influence among the broad masses of workers and peasants."\*

In the resolution of the Conference on the Fourth State Duma, the Social-Democratic fraction, or more correctly, the Menshevik faction, is recognized as the worthy parliamentary representative of the Russian proletariat, while the split in the Social-Democratic fraction of the Duma, the struggle of the Bolsheviks within the Duma fraction against the Mensheviks, is adjudged a manifestation of factionalism:

"The Conference recognizes that the Social-Democratic fraction of the Fourth State Duma has on the whole shown itself to be a worthy parliamentary representative of the Russian proletariat, and that its activity was in harmony with the principles of international Social-Democracy.

"Noting certain shortcomings, as, for instance, the vote on the proposal to re-establish the seven-hour working day for postal and telegraph employees, and an insufficient intensity in its activity, the Conference considers the main reason for this to be the intensification of the inner factional fight and the decline of discipline within the Social-Democratic fraction." \*\*

In the resolutions of the Conference on the peasant question, we find only a call for an appeal to the State Duma:

"... The Conference resolves to direct the Social-Democratic organizations to take all appropriate measures for the protection of the lawful interests of the peasantry, and to bring all unlawful actions of local authorities to the attention

\* Cf. "Communiqué" and Resolutions. Extract from the protocol of the Tiflis Gendarmerie Administration, Central Archives of Georgia, Folio No. 7, File No. 2742, 1914, pp. 21-25.

\*\* Cf. "Communiqué" and Resolutions. Section "On the State Duma."

of the Social-Democratic fraction for the purpose of introducing corresponding interpellations in the Duma.

"... To direct the local organizations to intensify their organizational and propagandist activity, and for this purpose to distribute Social-Democratic literature among them (the small landowners) . . . and to draw their representatives into cultural and educational activity in the countryside."\*

A Menshevik resolution was also adopted on S. Eliava's report on the co-operative movement:

"The Conference considers the present time of the revival of the workers' movement particularly auspicious for the organization of consumers' co-operatives, which constitute an important factor in the struggle against the constantly rising prices of articles of consumption, and resolves to carry on widespread agitation for their organization."\*\*

The resolution of the Conference on trade unions was typically Menshevik and Liquidationist.

"The Conference considers it necessary to organize committees of enlightened workers, in the localities, in every industry, and in every trade, for the distribution of trade union literature, for drawing up draft rules and for calling preliminary meetings to discuss them.

"In the event of refusal to register a union established in accordance with the regulations of May 4, the Conference proposes that a complaint be lodged with the Senate against such unlawful refusal."\*\*\*

Such were the resolutions of this conference of Menshevik-Liquidators.

It is significant that the representatives of the Baku and Tiflis Bolshevik organizations, i.e., precisely those organizations which were waging a bitter struggle against the Liquidators, were not admitted to the Conference.

On the national question, the Conference decided to open a discussion in the press on national cultural autonomy, between the supporters of the Party program and the supporters of the slogan of national cultural autonomy. And this despite the fact that the Cracow Conference of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. (January

\* *Ibid.*, Section "On Work Among the Peasants."

\*\* *Ibid.*, Section "On Co-operatives."

\*\*\* *Ibid.*, Section "On the Trade Unions."

1913) had already condemned the slogan of national cultural autonomy.

In the central organ of the Party, the *Sotsial-Demokrat*, this Transcaucasian Regional Conference of the Mensheviks was characterized as follows:

“At the Regional Conference which has just taken place, delegates from seven localities were present. Baku was not represented. There was also no one present from the group of Tiflis Bolsheviks. . . .

“Liquidators of the first water attended the Conference, but they hid their true colours.

“The newly-elected Organizational Committee includes one Bolshevik and another member who vacillates greatly between Caucasian Menshevism and our policy.”\*

*Thus, during the period of 1912-13, the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia carried on a fierce struggle not only against the Menshevik-Liquidators and the Menshevik-Trotskyites, but also against the conciliators among the Bolsheviks, who had entered on a path of compromise and collaboration with the Mensheviks in accordance with the opportunist principle of the Trotskyite “August bloc” (Comrade Ph. Makharadze as well as M. Okujava, S. Eliava, T. Zhgenti, B. Bibineishvili, and others).*

The Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia had to fight just as hard against the conciliationists and the opportunist tendencies towards amalgamation during the period of 1917 also. In the period of the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917, on the initiative of Comrade Ph. Makharadze, the Tiflis group of Bolsheviks came out in favour of union with the Mensheviks. Right up to the April Conference of our Party in 1917, Makharadze advocated unity with the Mensheviks, maintaining that at bottom the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks had a single program.

Makharadze’s argument for unity was as follows:

“But as long as all of us, Bolsheviks as well as Mensheviks, have at bottom a single program and an identical understanding of the great tasks that history has imposed upon the working class, we must not split our forces, but must unite and create a single, powerful organization.

“It goes without saying that even given the existence of a single organization, *ideological* divergence and disagreement are not only possible but must exist in the interests of healthy

\* *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 32, December 15, 1913, p. 9.

development. On the contrary; these ideological disagreements must unceasingly invigorate the life of the Party, must impel it forward, not allowing it to stand still in one place.”\*

*Throughout the history of the Party, the Bolsheviks, with Lenin and Stalin at their head, fought tenaciously not only against opportunism but also against every kind of conciliation with it.*

In one of his letters, Lenin defined the danger of conciliationism in the following way:

“Conciliationism and amalgamationism are a most harmful thing for the labour party in Russia: it is not only idiocy, but *fatal* to the Party. For in reality ‘amalgamation’ (or conciliation, etc.) with Chkheidze and Skobelev (matters hinge on them since they parade as ‘internationalists’) means ‘unity’ with the adherents of the Org [anizational] Com[mittee] and through it with the Potressovs & Co., i.e., in reality, *servility* to the social-chauvinists. . . .

“We can rely only upon those who have understood the absolute deceptiveness of the idea of unity, and the absolute necessity of a split with this fraternity (Chkheidze & Co.) in Russia.”\*\*

Therefore the attempt on the part of Ph. Makharadze, T. Zhgenti and others to proclaim conciliationism a “legitimate current” of Bolshevism, and to *substitute* the history of the struggle of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks against the Menshevik-Liquidators and the conciliators by the history of the peace and collaboration of the opportunists and conciliators with the Menshevik-Liquidators, is a gross falsification of the history of the Bolshevik organizations of Georgia.

Thus:

1) *During the years of reaction the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, like the whole Bolshevik Party led by Lenin, retreated in perfect order, with the least possible detriment to the revolutionary movement, and carried on an enormous amount of revolutionary work in building and strengthening the illegal Party organization, waging a heroic struggle in preparation*

\* Ph. Makharadze, in *Kavkazsky Rabochy* (Caucasian Worker), No. 14, March 28, 1917. This newspaper was the organ of the Caucasian Territorial and the Tiflis Committees of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks). It began to appear on March 11, 1917. Altogether 232 numbers were published in 1917, and 29 in 1918.

\*\* Lenin, *Miscellany*, Vol. II, p. 278, Russ. ed.

*for a victorious assault upon the autocracy, for the victory of the revolution.*

2) *During the difficult years of reaction the Baku Bolshevik organization, under the direct leadership of Comrade Stalin, was an impregnable fortress of Lenin's Party. The glorious Bolshevik traditions implanted by Comrade Stalin, the closest colleague of our great Lenin, put the Baku proletariat in the front ranks of those fighting for the victory of the revolution, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the victory of socialism.*

3) *With Comrade Stalin at the helm, the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia have at all stages of the revolutionary movement carried on an uncompromising struggle against all enemies of the working class, primarily against the Mensheviks, the bourgeois nationalists, the "conciliators" and "compromisers." The historic "Letters from the Caucasus," in which Comrade Stalin tore the mask from the ideologists and builders of the Stolypin "Labour Party," played an extremely important part in the exposure and rout of the Mensheviks. (Loud applause.)*

## IV

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### ***On the History of the Struggle Against National Deviationism (1913-1924)***

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On the national question the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia and of Georgia throughout their history carried on an uncompromising struggle against the bourgeois nationalism of the Mensheviks and the bourgeois-nationalist parties—the Federalists and the Dashnaks—as well as against all nationalist deviations in their own ranks.

Comrade Stalin waged a struggle of tremendous historical significance against the Georgian Mensheviks on the national question.

As is known, the Georgian Mensheviks put forward the reactionary nationalist demand for national cultural autonomy for the nationalities of the Caucasus as against the Bolshevik slogan of “the right of nations to self-determination and independent political existence.” The program of national cultural autonomy, borrowed by the Mensheviks from the Austrian Social-Democrats (Mensheviks) and the Bund, was based upon a monarchist, liberal-constitutional solution of the national question in Russia.

Since national cultural autonomy did not touch the foundations of the bourgeois-landlord system, it left full economic and political power in the hands of the landowners and the bourgeoisie of the ruling Great-Russian nation, and if it had been put into effect would have made Transcaucasia an arena of bloody conflicts between the nationalities.

Stalin’s *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, which he wrote abroad, was published in 1913.

Lenin was the first to appreciate the great importance of Comrade Stalin’s theoretical works on the national question.

In 1913 Lenin wrote to Gorky:

“Regarding nationalism I quite agree with you that it must be studied more earnestly. We have a splendid Georgian who has got down to work and is writing a big article for *Pro-*



*sveshcheniye* [*Enlightenment*], after collecting all the Austrian and other data.' '\*

Somewhat later Lenin wrote:

“In theoretical Marxist literature this state of affairs and the principles of the national program of S.-D. have already been elucidated recently (here Stalin’s article comes first).” \*\*

In his book *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* Comrade Stalin gives the following exhaustive analysis of the reasons for the national question being so much in the limelight at that time:

“The period of counter-revolution in Russia brought not only ‘thunder and lightning’ in its train, but also disillusionment in the movement and lack of faith in common forces. As long as people believed in ‘a bright future,’ they fought side by side irrespective of nationality: common questions first and foremost! But when doubt crept into people’s hearts, they began to depart, each to his own national tent. Let every man count upon himself! The ‘national question’ first and foremost!

“At the same time a profound upheaval was taking place in the economic life of the country. The year 1905 had not been in vain: one more blow had been struck at the survivals of serfdom in the country districts. The series of good harvests which succeeded the starvation years, and the industrial boom that followed, furthered the progress of capitalism. The differentiation of the peasants, the growth of the towns, the development of trade and means of communication all took a big stride forward. This applied particularly to the border regions. And this could not but hasten the process of economic consolidation of the nationalities of Russia. They were bound to be stirred into movement. . . .

“The ‘constitutional regime’ which was established at that time also acted in the same direction of stirring up the nationalities. The spread of newspapers and of literature generally, a certain freedom of the press and cultural institutions, an increase in the number of national theatres, and so forth, all unquestionably helped to strengthen ‘national sentiments.’

\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, “Letter to Gorky,” p. 328, Russ. ed.

\*\* *Ibid.*, Vol. XVII, “On the National Program of the R.S.D.L.P.,” p. 116.

The Duma, with its election campaigns and political groups, gave fresh opportunities for greater activity on the part of the nations and provided a new and wide arena for their mobilization.”\*

In his *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* (1913), Comrade Stalin substantiated the Bolshevik theory on the national question and tore the Menshevik program of national cultural autonomy to pieces.

“... national cultural autonomy . . . shuts up the nations within their old shells, chains them to the lower rungs of cultural development and prevents them from rising to the higher rungs of culture . . . in addition to retarding the development of the backward nations it transforms regional autonomy into a cause of conflict between the nations organized in the national unions.

“Thus, national cultural autonomy, which is unsuitable generally, would be a senseless reactionary escapade in the Caucasus.”\*\*

In the ranks of the Bolsheviks of Georgia and of Transcaucasia in the pre-Soviet period, we had, on the one hand, a liberal-conciliatory attitude among certain Party members towards the Menshevik nationalist program on the national question, and, on the other hand, a “Leftist” petty-bourgeois repudiation of Lenin’s and Stalin’s slogan of the right of nations to self-determination (Comrade Ph. Makharadze). In the Communist organizations of Transcaucasia the struggle against nationalist deviations was particularly bitter after the establishment of Soviet rule.

The national-deviationist opposition in the ranks of the Communist Party of Georgia arose and took shape in 1921. During the entire period of 1921-24 the Georgian national deviationists carried on a fierce struggle against the Leninist-Stalinist national policy of our Party.

The national deviationists were severely censured, defeated and smashed at the Second and Third Congresses of the Communist Party of Georgia, at the Second and Third Congresses of the Communist organizations of Transcaucasia and at the Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.).

In 1924 a considerable number of the national deviationists joined what was then the Trotskyite anti-Party opposition.

\* J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, p. 3, Co-operative Publishing Society, Moscow, 1935.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 50.

The leading group of the Georgian national deviationists included Ph. Makharadze, B. Mdivani, S. Kavtaradze, M. Okujava, M. Toroshelidze and K. Tsintsadze.\* One cannot help remembering that even in the period of preparation for the October Socialist Revolution and during it (April 1917 to 1918) they held a Right opportunist standpoint, followed the treacherous line of the Right scabs in the Great October Revolution, by opposing Lenin's plan of transforming the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.

They preached the Menshevik view that revolutionary democracy must exercise control over the bourgeois Provisional Government, bring pressure to bear on the latter and on the governments of the belligerent powers for the purpose of concluding a speedy peace.

After the Kornilov mutiny they supported the Transcaucasian Mensheviks' slogan for the transfer of power to "revolutionary democracy," which was serving as a screen for bourgeois counter-revolution.

At that time Comrade Stalin drew an extraordinarily vivid and convincing picture of the revolutionary situation which had arisen in Transcaucasia. In *Pravda* of March 27, 1918, Comrade Stalin wrote:

"The Transcaucasian soldiers who have returned from the front have spread the agrarian revolution through the villages. Manors of the Moslem and Georgian landlords went up in smoke. The foundations of the feudal survivals were vigorously attacked by the 'Bolshevized' soldier-peasants. Obviously, the Transcaucasian Commissariat's empty promises to give the land to the peasants could no longer satisfy peasants caught up by the agrarian wave. Action was demanded of it, but revolutionary action, not counter-revolutionary.

"And the workers, too, did not and could not lag behind events.

"First, the revolution which was sweeping from the north and bringing many gains for the workers naturally roused the Transcaucasian workers to struggle anew. Even the workers of sleepy Tiflis, the bulwark of Menshevik counter-revolution, began to forsake the Transcaucasian Commissariat, and express themselves in favour of Soviet power. Secondly, after the triumph of the Soviets in the North Caucasus, which supplied grain

\* In 1936, B. Mdivani, S. Kavtaradze, M. Toroshelidze (and K. Tsintsadze at an earlier date) were exposed as enemies of the people.

to Tiflis during the Kaledin-Philimonov occupation, the food shortage could not but get worse, which naturally provoked a number of food 'riots'—revolutionary North Caucasus flatly refused to feed counter-revolutionary Tiflis. Thirdly, the absence of currency (token money cannot serve as a substitute) disrupted economic life and, most of all, railway transport, which undoubtedly aggravated the discontent of the urban masses. Finally, revolutionary, proletarian Baku, which had recognized Soviet power from the very first days of the October Revolution and had fought constantly against the Transcaucasian Commissariat, did not let the Transcaucasian proletariat sleep, but served as an infectious example and a living beacon illuminating the path to socialism.

"All this taken together could not but lead to the revolutionization of the whole political situation in Transcaucasia.

"At last things came to such a pass that even the 'most reliable' national regiments began to get 'demoralized' and went over to the side of the Bolsheviks."\*

The Baku Bolsheviks took the utmost advantage of the revolutionary situation at the beginning of 1918.

With the help and guidance of Lenin and Stalin the Baku Bolsheviks, led by S. Shaumyan and A. Japaridze, were victorious in the proletarian revolution.

In April 1918 the Baku proletariat came to armed blows with the Mussavat-Balakhan counter-revolution and established Soviet rule (the Baku Commune).

But the Tiflis opportunist leadership—Comrade Makharadze and B. Mdivani, M. Okujava, M. Toroshelidze and others—ignoring the instructions of Lenin and Stalin, categorically refused to prepare or carry out an armed struggle for power in Georgia and Transcaucasia, actually surrendered the Tiflis arsenal to the Mensheviks, refused to agitate for Soviet power among the soldiers or to use the revolutionary soldiers from the Caucasian front to fight for the overthrow of the bloc of the counter-revolutionary parties of Transcaucasia (Mensheviks, Dashnaks, Mussavatists<sup>6</sup>) which had seized power after the February Revolution. After the October Revolution they advanced the slogan for a peaceful transfer of power to the Soviets and strove to induce the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries to recognize Soviet power.

\* Stalin, *Transcaucasian Counter-Revolutionaries Under the Mask of Socialism*, pp. 26-27.

This group defined their standpoint in a proclamation of the Caucasian Territorial Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) as follows:

"For several days the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the defencist parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries have been busy spreading provocative rumours to the effect that the Bolsheviks are getting ready for action.

"Our Party has stated definitely and emphatically that the Bolsheviks in Tiflis are undertaking no action whatever. . . .

"Not one shot! Not a single bullet must pierce the breast of a worker, the breast of a soldier.

"We have been certain all along that the question around which the conflict arose could have been settled peaceably.

"And we are certain now that the whole question can be settled without bloody collisions. . . .

"Once again we declare before the soldiers, workers and citizens that the Bolsheviks are contemplating no action whatever in Tiflis. There is absolutely no call for armed action, especially at the moment when the Workers' and Peasants' Government has grown strong, powerful and has been recognized by the overwhelming majority of Russia's democracy."\*

Owing to the treacherous tactics of this leading group, the Bolsheviks of Georgia failed to utilize the favourable revolutionary situation at the end of 1917 to seize power.

The national deviationists launched their first attack against the national policy of our Party in 1921, in connection with the amalgamation of the railways of Transcaucasia, the amalgamation of the Boards for Foreign Trade of the individual republics, and the liquidation of customs and inspection points on the borders between the Soviet republics of Transcaucasia.

The victory of the Soviet socialist revolution, the establishment of Soviet rule and the imperative need for joint efforts in restoring the national economy and building socialism at once raised the question of how to establish lasting national peace and close fraternal collaboration between the peoples of Transcaucasia. Therefore, preliminary measures were taken, in 1921, for the economic amalgamation of the republics of Transcaucasia. On April 9, 1921, Lenin issued direct instructions to set up a regional economic body for the republics of Transcaucasia. In answer to

\* Proclamation of the "Caucasian Territorial Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.," Quoted from *Kavkazsky Rabochy* (Caucasian Worker), December 1, 1917.

the report of Comrade S. Orjonikidze on the difficult economic situation of the republics of Transcaucasia, Lenin replied:

"I received your code message about the desperate situation in Transcaucasia. We have taken a number of measures, have given some gold to Armenia, and confirmed the various instructions given to the Commissariat for Food Supplies. But I must warn you that we are in great need here, and shall not be able to help. *I urgently demand that a regional economic organ for the entire Transcaucasus be established . . .* that efforts be made to buy seeds, even abroad, and that the irrigation of Azerbaijan be pushed with the help of Baku resources, in order to develop agriculture and cattle-raising, and also that efforts be made to promote the exchange of goods with the North Caucasus. Have you and the Georgian comrades grasped the significance of our new policy in connection with the food tax? Read this to them and send me information more often. . . ."

During 1921 only the Transcaucasian railways and the Boards for Foreign Trade could be amalgamated, because the group of Georgian national deviationists in every way delayed and hindered the economic amalgamation of the republics of Transcaucasia.

The main barrier to the fraternal amalgamation of the peoples of Transcaucasia was the survivals of national chauvinism inherited from the time when the counter-revolutionary nationalist governments of the Mensheviks, Dashnaks and Mussavatists existed. Therefore, for the purpose of uniting the efforts of the republics of Transcaucasia for joint socialist construction it was necessary first of all to eradicate these elements of nationalism and national dissension, to create an atmosphere of mutual confidence, and to restore the old fraternal inter-national bonds between the peoples of Transcaucasia.

That is why Lenin, in his historic letter to the Communists of the Caucasus (April 14, 1921), attached exceptional significance to the establishment of peace among the nationalities.

" . . . I permit myself to express the hope," writes Lenin in this letter, "that their close alliance" (of the Soviet Republics of the Caucasus) "will serve as a model of national peace, un-

\* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVI, "Telegram to G.K. Orjonikidze," pp. 188-91, Russ. ed.

precedented under the bourgeoisie and impossible under the bourgeois system.’’\*

Comrade Stalin, in his report “On the Immediate Tasks of Communism in Georgia and in Transcaucasia,” delivered at the meeting of the Tiflis Party organization on July 6, 1921, said that a relentless struggle against nationalism was the main political task of the Communists of Transcaucasia.

He said:

“I remember the years 1905-17, when complete fraternal solidarity was to be observed among the workers and the toiling population of the Transcaucasian nationalities in general, when bonds of brotherhood held together the Armenian, Georgian, Azerbaijan and Russian workers in one socialist family. Now, upon my arrival in Tiflis, I have been astounded by the absence of the former solidarity between the workers of the nationalities of Transcaucasia. Nationalism has developed among the workers and peasants, and a feeling of mistrust towards the comrades of other nationalities has grown strong: anti-Armenian, anti-Tatar, anti-Georgian, anti-Russian and every other sort of nationalism is now rife. The old bonds of fraternal confidence are severed, or at least greatly weakened. Obviously the three years’ existence of nationalist governments in Georgia (Mensheviks), in Azerbaijan (Mussavatists) and in Armenia (Dashnaks) did not pass without effect. By carrying out their national policies, by working among the toilers in a spirit of aggressive nationalism, these nationalist governments finally brought matters to the point where each of these small countries found itself surrounded by a hostile nationalist atmosphere which deprived Georgia and Armenia of Russian grain and Azerbaijan oil, and Azerbaijan and Russia of goods going through Batum—not to speak of armed clashes (Georgian-Armenian war) and massacres (Armenian-Tatar), the natural result of the nationalist policy. No wonder that in this poisonous nationalist atmosphere the old bonds between the nationalities have become sundered and the minds of the workers poisoned by nationalism. And since the survivals of this nationalism have not yet been eliminated among the workers, this circumstance (nationalism) is the greatest hindrance to amalgamating the economic (and military) efforts of the

\* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. IX, “To the Communists of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Daghestan, and the Gorsky Republic,” p. 203, Co-operative Publishing Society, Moscow, 1937.

Transcaucasian Soviet Republics. . . . It is therefore the immediate task of the Communists of Georgia to put up a ruthless fight against nationalism, to restore the old fraternal bonds between the various nationalities, bonds that had existed before the nationalist Menshevik governments came on the scene, and thus create that healthy atmosphere of mutual confidence which is necessary for concerted economic effort on the part of the Transcaucasian Soviet Republics, and for the economic revival of Georgia.”\*

These instructions by Lenin and Stalin predetermined the formation of the Transcaucasian Federation.

Despite the amalgamation of the railways and of the Boards for Foreign Trade, the Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia continued to lead self-contained lives. Each of them had its own monetary system and was walled in by customs barriers and frontier points of inspection. The national deviationists made the boundary question an object of discussion at the special conference of official representatives of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, which they tried to conduct according to all the rules of the art of diplomacy. At the first congress of the Communist Party of Georgia, Budu Mdivani said the following on the question of border lines:

“As to the delimitation of frontiers, we told the Armenian Communists that there were no disputes between us, but that there was lack of clarity, and that for tactical reasons it was better to take a referendum in the regions in dispute.”\*\*

On July 2, 1921, the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) for the first time censured the nationalist deviation of a group of Georgian comrades. The minutes of the Plenum of the Caucasian Bureau of the C.C. of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) for July 2 and 3, 1921, state:

“Noting the deviation towards nationalism manifested in the decision on the questions of the Board for Foreign Trade, of the territorial delimitation of the Republics, and of the abolition of customs and inspection points, the Caucasian Bureau instructs the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Transcaucasian Republics strictly to impress

\* Stalin in *Pravda Gruzii* (*The Truth of Georgia*), July 13, 1921.

\*\* From the *Stenographic Report of the Second Congress of the Communist Organizations of Transcaucasia*, p. 60, 1923. Published by the Transcaucasian Territorial Committee.



upon all Party representatives that it is necessary to approach the solution of such questions solely from the standpoint of the interests of the fraternal bond connecting the toiling masses of these Republics.”\*

At the end of 1921, in view of the fact that close economic and political collaboration among the Transcaucasian Republics was impossible without a political union of the states involved, the question of the need for a federation of the Transcaucasian Republics was raised. On November 3, 1921, the Plenum of the Caucasian Bureau of the C.C. of the R.C.P. (B.), in which Comrade Molotov, the Secretary of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.), took part, adopted the following decision on the establishment of a federation of the Transcaucasian Republics:

“The isolated political existence of the Transcaucasian Republics enfeebles them in face of the capitalist and bourgeois countries; a close political union will serve as a reliable guarantee against any attempts upon them on the part of counter-revolutionary forces and will strengthen the Soviet power on the borders of the Near East.

“Political amalgamation will enable the Republics really to establish a close economic alliance among themselves, attempts to conclude which have been made repeatedly. Moreover, the dissociation of the Republics has aggravated the already difficult economic situation of Transcaucasia, the poverty and ruin of the masses of the people, and has brought on a series of misunderstandings among the Republics. Transcaucasia is a single economic unit and its economic development can proceed only on the condition of an all-Caucasian economic unification.

“Finally, the numerous People’s Commissariats and other government offices in the Republics consume a great amount of man-power and material means, and create unnecessary parallelism in the work of many bodies; therefore joint effort in the sphere of administration in the main and most important departments of governmental activity will strengthen and improve Soviet work.

“In accordance with the foregoing, the Caucasian Bureau considers:

\* Party History Archives, File No. 31, Sheet 3, Minutes of the Plenum of the Caucasian Bureau of the C.C. of the R.C.P. (B.), July 2-3, 1921.

"1) That it is urgently necessary to conclude a federal union between the Republics, primarily in the sphere of military, economic and financial work and foreign policy;

"2) That it is necessary to set up an administrative and economic centre for the Transcaucasian Republics (Union Council).'"\*

A group of deviationists (including Budu Mdivani, Koté Tsintsadze, Ph. Makharadze, S. Kavtaradze, M. Okujava, M. Toroshelidze and L. Dumbadze) came out openly against the establishment of the Transcaucasian Federation. The deviationists tried to make out that the Federation of the Transcaucasian Republics was an imposition of the Caucasian Bureau and Comrade S. Orjonikidze personally, and that Lenin and Stalin did not support the idea of the Transcaucasian Federation.

It is a known fact that the inspirers and organizers of the Transcaucasian Federation were Lenin and Stalin.

In his report at the Twelfth Party Congress, Comrade Stalin, speaking on the question of the formation of the Transcaucasian Federation, said:

"On November 28, 1921, Comrade Lenin sends me a draft of his proposal for the formation of a Federation of the Transcaucasian Republics. It proposes: '1) To recognize the Federation of the Transcaucasian Republics as absolutely correct in principle and its realization as absolutely necessary, although it would be premature to apply it in practice immediately, i.e., it would require several weeks for discussion and propaganda, and for carrying it through from below; 2) to instruct the Central Committees of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan to carry out this decision.' I write to Comrade Lenin and suggest that there be no hurry about this, to wait a little, to give the local functionaries a certain period of time to carry through the Federation. I write to him: 'Comrade Lenin, I am not opposed to your resolution, if you agree to accept the following amendment: instead of the words "would require several weeks for discussion," in Point 1, say: "would require a certain period of time for discussion," and so on, as per your resolution. The point is that in Georgia it is impossible to "carry through", a federation "from below" by "Soviet procedure" in "several weeks," since in Georgia the Soviets are only just beginning to be organized. They are not yet

\* *Loc cit.*, Minutes of the Evening Session of the Plenum of the Caucasian Bureau of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.), November, 3, 1921.

built up. A month ago, they did not exist at all, and to call a congress of Soviets there in "several weeks" is inconceivable; and, well, a federation without Georgia would be a federation on paper only. I think it necessary to allow two or three months for the idea of federation to triumph among the broad masses of Georgia. Stalin.' Comrade Lenin answers: 'I accept this amendment. . . .' This decision was adopted by the Political Bureau at the end of 1921 . . . unanimously. The struggle of the group of Georgian Communists, headed by Comrade Mdivani, against the instructions of the Central Committee concerning federation dates back to this time. You see, comrades, that the case was not as it has been represented by Comrade Mdivani. I cite this document against those unseemly insinuations which Comrade Mdivani made here."\*

The Georgian deviationists repeatedly protested to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (B.) against the formation of the Transcaucasian Federation.

In reply to the appeals and complaints of the Georgian deviationists, the Central Committee of the Party headed by Lenin and Stalin, on April 5, 1922, once more passed a resolution on the Transcaucasian Federation. This decision stated:

"The struggle to strengthen peace among nations and the fraternal solidarity of the toiling masses of Transcaucasia remains, as before, the major political task of the Communist Party. The Central Committee, in particular, reaffirms its decision on the Federation of the Transcaucasian Republics, charging the Communist Party of Transcaucasia to carry out this decision unconditionally and without reservation." \*\*

Under the leadership of the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.), the Transcaucasian Party organizations popularized the idea of the Transcaucasian Federation among the masses of the working population, through the Party, Young Communist League, and trade union organizations, mobilizing them around the idea of a political amalgamation of the Transcaucasian Republics.

On March 12, 1922, a plenipotentiary conference of the Central Executive Committees of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia estab-

\* *Stenographic Report of the Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)*, p. 184, 1923 edition.

\*\* Quoted from the pamphlet, *Ten Years of the Transcaucasian Federation*, pp. 14-15.

lished the Federative Union of Socialist Republics of Transcaucasia. At this conference a federal treaty was adopted, by which a Union Council and a Supreme Economic Council attached to it were established on the following basis:

"I. Supreme power in the Union of Republics shall be vested in a Plenipotentiary Conference of Representatives, to be elected in equal numbers by the governments of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia.

"II. The executive organ of the Plenipotentiary Conference shall be a 'Union Council,' the members of which shall be elected and subject to recall by the Conference.

"III. The 'Union Council' shall be in charge of military affairs, finance, foreign affairs, foreign trade, transport, means of communication, the struggle against counter-revolution, and the management of the economic policy on the territory of the contracting Republics. . . ."

The Transcaucasian Federation, which was acclaimed with enthusiasm by the toiling masses, met with furious opposition on the part of the bourgeois and aristocratic elements, the chauvinist bourgeois intelligentsia and the remnants of the defeated anti-Soviet parties—the Mensheviks, Dashnaks and Mussavatists. Reflecting these national-chauvinist sentiments, the national-deviationist opposition launched a fierce attack against the Transcaucasian Federation, and soon demanded that it be dissolved and that Georgia enter the Soviet Union directly.

Let us cite two documents:

On September 15, 1922, the Central Committee of Georgia, led by the deviationists, adopted a decision to "preserve the attributes of independence." It read as follows:

"That amalgamation in the form of making the independent republics autonomous, as proposed in accordance with Comrade Stalin's theses, be deemed premature.

"That concerted economic effort and a common policy be deemed necessary, but that all the attributes of independence be preserved."\*\*

On October 21, 1922, the Central Committee of Georgia adopted a mendacious and contradictory decision to dissolve the Federation.

\* Party History Archives, File No. 31, p. 12.

\*\* Cf. Archives of the C.C. of the C.P.(B.) of Georgia, "Minutes of the Plenum of the C.C. of the C.P.(B.) of Georgia," No. 13, September 15, 1922.

based on Koté Tsintsadze's report on the results of the visit of a special commission to Moscow.

"1. To accept the report as a whole.

"2. To accept and carry out in full the decision of the Plenum of the C.C. of the R.C.P. on the federation of the Soviet Republics.

"3. To petition the C.C. of the R.C.P. that Georgia be admitted directly into the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

"4. In the event that the C.C. of the R.C.P. should grant the petition of the C.C. of the Communist Party of Georgia for the direct admission of Georgia into the Union of Soviet Republics, to consider the existence of the Transcaucasian Union Council superfluous."\*

A small group in the Azerbaijan Communist Party also opposed the formation of the federation, claiming that the time was not ripe (R. Akhundov\*\* and others). There were opponents of the federation in the ranks of the Azerbaijan Communist Party (Bolsheviks)—Kadirly and others—who came out more openly, demanding the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the direct entry of Azerbaijan into the U.S.S.R.

*The Azerbaijan Communist Party, headed by Comrade Kirov, quickly routed the national deviationists.*

The Baku proletariat, true to the international banner of Lenin and Stalin, took its place in the front ranks of those fighting for the formation of a strong Transcaucasian Federation.

*The Transcaucasian Party organization, under the leadership of Comrade S. Orjonikidze, dealt a crushing blow to national deviationism and brought about the establishment of a federative union of the republics of Transcaucasia.*

At the end of 1922 a further step towards the strengthening of the economic and political union between the republics of Transcaucasia was taken by transforming the Federative Union of Transcaucasian Republics into a single federative republic (Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic), each republic entering it retaining its independence.

The T.S.F.S.R. became a powerful factor for peace among the nationalities, for the fraternal collaboration of the peoples of Transcaucasia, and an organ for uniting their efforts in the cause of socialist construction.

\* *Ibid.*, No. 15, October 21, 1922.

\*\* In 1936 R. Akhundov was exposed as an enemy of the people.

Despite the decision of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) and Lenin's and Stalin's instructions, a group of Georgian deviationists (headed by Budu Mdivani, Ph. Makharadze, Koté Tsintsadze, M. Okujava, and others), far from putting a stop to the anti-Party struggle, fought harder than ever against the Transcaucasian Federation. The Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) was therefore obliged to return once more to the question of the federation. Let us cite two documents:

1. Comrade Stalin's telegram of October 16, 1922, to the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

"The proposal of the Georgian C.C. concerning the prematureness of amalgamation and the preservation of independence was unanimously rejected by the Plenum of the C.C. In view of such unanimity in the Plenum, the representative of the C.C. of Georgia, Mdivani, was obliged to abandon the proposal of the Georgian C.C. The proposal of the members of the commission: Stalin, Orjonikidze, Myasnikov and Molotov, to preserve the Transcaucasian Federation, and incorporate it, together with the R.S.F.S.R., the Ukraine and Byelorussia, in the 'Union of Socialist Soviet Republics' was adopted by the Plenum without any amendment. The text of the resolution follows with Comrade Orjonikidze. The C.C. of the R.C.P. has no doubt that its instructions will be carried out with enthusiasm."\*

2. Lenin's telegram of October 21, 1922.

"I am astonished at the unseemly tone of the wire signed by Tsintsadze and others, delivered to me by Comrade Bukharin and not by one of the secretaries of the C.C. I was convinced that the disagreements had been settled by the decision of the Plenum of the C.C. with my indirect participation, and with the direct participation of Mdivani. I therefore emphatically condemn your vituperation against Orjonikidze, and insist that you submit your conflict in a decent and loyal tone for settlement by the Secretariat of the C.C., to which I am wiring your message. Lenin."\*\*

Georgian national deviationism arose in the period of the New Economic Policy (NEP), and constituted an openly Right opportunist group which had lapsed into Menshevik positions both on the national question and on questions of general policy. Georgian national deviationism arose not so much from the tendency to

\* Archives of the C.C. of the C.P.(B.) of Georgia for 1922.

\*\* Archives of the Tiflis Branch of the M.E.L.I.

struggle against Great-Russian nationalism as from the tendency of aggressive Georgian nationalism, directed against the non-Georgian nationalities of Transcaucasia, and primarily against the Armenians.

National deviationism wanted to make use of Georgia's geographic and economic advantages, which were due to her possession of such important central points as Tiflis and Batum. On this basis the national deviationists, in demanding withdrawal from the Federation, wanted to create and to develop privileges for the Georgians at the expense of Soviet Azerbaijan and Armenia, and still more at the expense of the national minorities—the Abkhazians, Ajarians, Ossetians, Armenians, and others.

The Georgian deviationists fought against granting autonomy to the national minorities of Georgia. The then existing Central Committee and the Revolutionary Committee of Georgia (B. Mdivani, S. Kavtaradze, M. Okujava, K. Tsintsadze, and others) did everything in their power to delay the granting of autonomy to Southern Ossetia, Ajaristan and Abkhazia. Autonomy for these republics was granted and put into effect against the will of the deviationist majority of the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Committee of Georgia. It is well known that one of the leaders of Georgian deviationism, B. Mdivani, voted against the decision to include the town of Tskhinvali in the South Ossetian Autonomous Region, and that another leader of the deviationists, S. Kavtaradze, refused to send greetings to the Red Ajarian Mejlis in the name of the Central Committee and Revolutionary Committee of Georgia. The Georgian deviationists proposed as a centre for Ajaristan, not Batum, but Khulo or Kedy. (*Laughter in the audience.*)

Thus rejection of the Transcaucasian Federation and struggle against it, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, rejection of autonomy for the national minorities of Georgia and struggle against autonomy for Southern Ossetia, Ajaristan and Abkhazia constituted the nationalist theory and practice of Georgian deviationism.

National deviationism represented a fairly many-sided system of nationalist Menshevik views. It is known that the Georgian deviationists made an attempt to pass a decree "to disencumber" Tiflis, the effect of which would have been the expulsion of the non-Georgian nationalities, primarily of the Armenians. Another well known fact is the cordon decree, termed "monstrous" by Comrade Stalin, under which Georgia fenced itself off from the Soviet republics; also the decree on citizenship, according to which a Georgian woman who married a man of another nationality

(a non-Georgian) was deprived of the rights of Georgian citizenship. (*Laughter in the audience.*)

Here are these documents:

1) On March 31, 1922, the following telegram is sent, bearing the signatures of Comrade Makharadze, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Georgia, and Okujava, Vice-Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars:

"Rostov-on-Don, to the Executive Committee, copy to the Central Evacuation Board; Novorossiisk, to the Executive Committee, copy to the Chief of the Evacuation Board; Vladikavkaz, to the Chairman of the C.E.C. of the Gorsky Republic, copy to the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars; Batum, to the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Ajaristan, copies to the Chairman of the Executive Committee, the Chairman of the Transcaucasian Cheka, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of Georgia, the Chairman of the Cheka of Georgia, the Chief of Railways of the Transcaucasian Republic, the Chairman of the C.E.C. of Abkhazia, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of Georgia:

"As from this date, the frontiers of the Georgian Republic are declared closed; hereafter admission of refugees to the territory of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia is discontinued. We urgently request corresponding instructions to the respective organs, and confirmation of the receipt of this telegram. . . ."

2) "§ 1. Persons receiving permission for their relatives to enter Georgian territory shall pay 50,000 rubles for such permits. [In Georgian notes: one million rubles was equal to ten gold rubles.]

"§ 2. Government institutions requesting the issuance of entry permits to persons who may be needed because of their special knowledge shall pay 500,000 rubles. . . .

"§ 5. Persons who arrived in Georgia after August 13, 1917, and who wish to receive permission to reside in Georgia permanently, shall, if their request be granted, pay 1,000,000 rubles for the issuance of such permits.

"§ 6. Persons who on August 13, 1922, shall have resided in Georgia for five years . . . shall pay 1,000,000 rubles for the right of further residence in Georgia. . . .

"§ 8. The following persons who arrived in Georgia after August 13, 1917, shall have the right to remain in the country:

" . . . 3. All members of trade unions who shall have



been members for six months on the day of the issuance of this order.

4. "Citizens who have business relations with Georgia.

3) "Georgian citizenship shall be lost: by any Georgian female citizen who shall marry a foreigner."\*

*Thus national deviationism represented openly expressed, aggressive Georgian chauvinism, which might have transformed Transcaucasia into an arena of inter-national conflicts, which might have restored the situation that existed under Menshevik rule, when people resorted to the firebrand and internecine slaughter in fits of chauvinistic fury.*

In his report on the national question at the Twelfth Party Congress, Comrade Stalin described Georgian national deviationism as follows:

"But there is still a third factor hindering the amalgamation of the republics into a single union: it is the existence of nationalism in the individual republics. The New Economic Policy affects not only the Russian, but also the non-Russian population. The New Economic Policy is fostering private trade and industry not only in the centre of Russia, but also in the individual republics. And this New Economic Policy, and private capital, which is associated with it, nourish and foster Georgian, Azerbaijan, Uzbek and other nationalism. . . . If this nationalism were only defensive, it might not be worth making a fuss about. We could concentrate our entire action, our entire struggle, on Great-Russian chauvinism in the hope that if this powerful enemy were overcome, anti-Russian nationalism would be overcome with it; for, I repeat, this nationalism is in the long run a reaction to Great-Russian nationalism, a reply to it, a definite form of defence. Yes, that would be so if anti-Russian nationalism in the localities were nothing more than a reaction to Russian nationalism. But the trouble is that in some republics this defensive nationalism becomes converted into aggressive nationalism.

"Take Georgia. Over 30 per cent of its population are non-Georgians. They include Armenians, Abkhazians, Ajarians, Ossetians and Tatars. The Georgians dominate. And among a certain section of the Georgian Communists the idea has sprung up and been developing that there is no particular need to rock-

\* *Stenographic Report of the Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)* pp. 159-61, 1923 edition.

on with these small nationalities: they are less cultured, less developed, and there is therefore no need to reckon with them. This is chauvinism—a harmful and dangerous chauvinism; for it may turn, and has already turned, the small republic of Georgia into an arena of discord.”\*

In a number of questions of the general policy of the Party the Georgian deviationists assumed an openly opportunist position, lapsing into Menshevism. In the agrarian and peasant question the deviationists entered upon a Menshevik, kulak land policy. They stubbornly resisted the carrying out of the Bolshevik agrarian reform, ostensibly on the ground that there was no landlordism in Georgia, but actually out of solicitude for the Georgian princes and nobles. The C.C. and the Revolutionary Committee of Georgia, in which the national deviationists predominated, hindered and delayed the carrying out of the land reform, and, although Soviet rule had existed for two years, the land remained in the hands of the landowners, princes and other noblemen.

On January 25, 1923, Comrade Orjonikidze, in summing up the results of the kulak land policy of the deviationists, wrote:

“In its two years’ existence the People’s Commissariat of Agriculture has had no clear idea of what is going on in our countryside. Otherwise, how is it that the biggest landholdings in the counties are still untouched and that the former princes and noblemen are still sitting tight . . . the landlords are living on their old estates, the estates of their grandfathers, while the peasants are completely dependent economically on their good old overlords and princes, as of old. . . . According to the report of Comrade Shabanov, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Borchalin County, matters are no better there. The old tsarist generals, the former Abkhazian princes, the Tumanovs, the Counts Kuchenbakh are still in possession of their estates and do not even allow the peasants to make roads through ‘their’ property. To our shame, nearly every one of these gentlemen has a special certificate, given him by some Soviet official in the People’s Commissariat for Agriculture, guaranteeing him immunity and undisturbed possession. . . . An equally depressing picture is presented by Signakhi and Dushet Counties, where the most illustrious princes of Abkhazia, the Mukhranskys, Andronikovs and Cholokayevs are liv-

\* Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, “Report on National Factors in Party and State Development,” pp. 156-57.

ing in clover in their fine mansions, jeering at the peasants and the Soviet power.”\*

The Georgian deviationists openly advocated a Right opportunist position on questions of foreign trade also. It is a known fact that the deviationists demanded that the Batum oil installations be denationalized and leased as a concession to the imperialist Standard Oil Company.

It is also known that the national deviationists looked to the West in economic matters, with an eye to cheap goods from Constantinople.

The national deviationists strongly urged that a private bank be opened in Tiflis or Batum, as was proposed by the capitalist adventurer Khoshtaria. This bank was to be a branch of the Ottoman Bank, in actual fact a subsidiary of Anglo-French capital.

If this orientation towards the capitalist West had been effected, it would have made Transcaucasia, and Georgia in particular, an appendage of foreign capital.

The Georgian deviationists adopted an openly liberal-conciliatory attitude towards the Georgian Mensheviks.

As is known, at the beginning of the Sovietization of Georgia an amnesty was declared for the Mensheviks, who promptly took advantage of it in order to organize an underground and semi-underground struggle against Soviet rule.

*The Caucasian Bureau of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.), headed by Comrade Sergo Orjonikidze, set the aim of ruthlessly combating the Mensheviks, both by intensifying ideological and political work against Menshevik influence, and by taking repressive measures against the Menshevik counter-revolutionaries.*

The deviationist group strongly opposed the tactics of uncompromising struggle against the Mensheviks, and substituted the policy of smashing the Mensheviks by a policy of “peacefully overcoming and re-educating” the Menshevik counter-revolutionaries.

In order to gauge rightly the depths to which the Georgian deviationists had fallen with their liberal-conciliatory attitude towards the Mensheviks, it is sufficient merely to recall what belligerent Georgian Menshevism meant throughout its entire history.

From its very inception, Georgian Menshevism, headed by Jordania, falsified Marxism and adapted it to bourgeois nationalism and bourgeois democracy.

\* S. Orjonikidze, “We Must Drastically Put an End to the Outrages in the Countryside,” *Zarya Vostoka (Dawn of the East)*, No. 182, January 25, 1923.

During the years of the first Russian Revolution (1905-07) the Georgian Mensheviks, in alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie, fought against the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, against the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants.

During the years of reaction the Georgian Mensheviks constituted the extreme Right wing of the Liquidators. Jordania and the Georgian Mensheviks repudiated the demand for a democratic republic, in order to preserve their alliance with the bourgeoisie. The Georgian Mensheviks were the most active "builders" of the Stolypin "Labour Party."

During the imperialist war the Georgian Mensheviks were the most blatant defenders and armour-bearers of tsarism and the Russian bourgeoisie; they helped the tsarist satraps to smash the Bolshevik illegal organizations.

After the February Revolution the Georgian Mensheviks came out on the war question in favour of "a fight to a victorious finish," and opposed the granting of independence to Finland and the Ukraine, advocating a single, indivisible bourgeois Russia.

The Georgian Mensheviks were the vilest traitors and betrayers of the Georgian people. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution they severed Georgia from revolutionary Russia, entered into an alliance first with German and then with Anglo-French imperialism, and together with the Dashnaks and Mussavatists made Transcaucasia into a *place d'armes* for foreign intervention and bourgeois, Whiteguard counter-revolution against Soviet Russia (the alliance of the Mensheviks with Denikin, Alexeyev and other Whiteguard generals to fight Soviet power).

The Georgian Mensheviks were the basest traitors to the interests of the Georgian peasantry. They saved the Georgian princes and noblemen from the revolutionary wrath of the peasants; they crushed the revolutionary uprisings of the peasants in Mingrelia, Guria, Lechkhumi, Kakhetia, Southern Ossetia, Dushet and other counties; they were the executors of the Stolypin agrarian policy.

The Mensheviks were the inspirers and organizers of all the forces of reaction—the noblemen, the princes, the clergy and the bourgeoisie—against the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants of Georgia. Menshevik "democracy" was the last anchor of the bourgeois and aristocratic order.

The Mensheviks were organizers of the policy of bestial national chauvinism and set the nations of Transcaucasia against each other. It was they, the Georgian Purishkeviches, who organized a bloody

campaign against the national minorities of Georgia—the Ossetians, Abkhazians and Ajarians.

It was they, who, together with the Dashnaks, organized the bloody fratricidal Georgian-Armenian war. It was the Georgian Mensheviks, together with the Mussavatists and the Dashnaks, who were the organizers of the Shamkhor pogrom against the revolutionary soldiers.

After the victory of the socialist revolution in Transcaucasia and Georgia the remnants of defeated Georgian Menshevism did not cease to struggle against the proletarian dictatorship and communism for a single day. The Georgian Mensheviks, headed by Jordania and Ramishvili, took a path of bloody adventurism in their struggle against Soviet rule.

Relying on the Georgian princes, noblemen, tradesmen, clergy and their like, and supported financially and otherwise by the Anglo-French imperialists and their general staffs, in August 1924 the Georgian Mensheviks organized a comic opera insurrection against the Soviet government in Georgia.

This is what Comrade Stalin said about the Menshevik adventure of 1924:

“Our newspapers write about the comic opera events in Georgia. This is correct, for, on the whole, the insurrection in Georgia was staged, and not a popular insurrection.”\*

The dregs of the fascist counter-revolutionary Menshevik party, headed by N. Jordania, sold themselves outright to the imperialists and interventionists, placing all their hopes on counter-revolutionary war and intervention by the imperialist powers against the Soviet Union. They became common spies and scouts of the general staffs and intelligence services of the imperialist states, direct agents of fascism and imperialism.

And it is with these monsters that the Georgian deviationists attempted to establish friendly relations!

Despite the resistance of the Georgian national deviationists, the Communist Party of Georgia achieved the final defeat of counter-revolutionary Menshevism, and won from the Mensheviks those groups of misguided workers and peasants who had followed them in the past.

The victory of socialism in our country, the victory of socialist industrialization and the collective farm system, the tremendous rise in industry, agriculture and culture—national in form and

\* *Pravda*, October 23, 1924.

socialist in content—have put an end to Menshevism in Georgia.

All this, of course, does not mean that in the present conditions of acute class struggle and the abolition of classes, some of the relics of Menshevism cannot revive and become active in individual sectors of our construction.

The Georgian deviationist opposition met with full sympathy and support on the part of aggressive Georgian Menshevism and the national chauvinist intellectuals.

The Georgian Mensheviks repeatedly called on the national deviationists to fight against the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In the period of 1927-35 national deviationism, merging with counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, became the hired agency of fascism, an unprincipled and depraved gang of spies, wreckers, diversionists, secret agents and murderers, a rabid gang of sworn enemies of the working class.

In 1936 a Trotskyite spying and wrecking terrorist centre was unearthed, which included B. Mdivani, M. Okujava, S. Kavtaradze, M. Toroshelidze, S. Chikhladze, N. Kiknadze, and others.

The Georgian Trotskyite centre worked under the leadership and on the instructions of the united Trotskyite-Zinovievite centre of which it was a branch.

The membership of the now exposed Georgian Trotskyite centre consisted exclusively of national deviationists. Some of them had been exiled for their counter-revolutionary activities and on their return had wormed their way into the Party under false pretences. The others consisted of secret Trotskyites who had previously escaped detection and exposure.

As we know, the former national deviationists stubbornly denied their past connection with Trotsky. Now it has been proved black on white that the treacherous work of the national deviationists against the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.), against Comrade Stalin, against the national policy of Lenin and Stalin was guided directly by that arch-bandit Judas Trotsky ever since 1923.

Cornered by the evidence brought out by the investigation, the members of the Georgian counter-revolutionary fascist-Trotskyite centre and other arrested active Trotskyites admitted to their crimes against the Party, the Soviet government and the Georgian people.

In their confessions they unfolded a monstrous picture of their vile, treacherous, destructive work of espionage and wrecking.

The chief aim of the Georgian Trotskyite centre, like that of the united Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorist centre, was to overthrow Soviet power and restore the capitalist system.

Counting on the defeat of the Soviet Union in the forthcoming war with the capitalist powers, the Trotskyites did all in their power to weaken the might of our socialist country by espionage, diversions and wrecking. Their intention was to sever Transcaucasia and Georgia in particular from the Soviet Union, and with the help of all anti-Soviet forces to form an "independent" Georgian state as a protectorate of one of the capitalist powers.

For this purpose the Georgian Trotskyites in the person of Budu Mdivani made a bloc with the representatives of the defeated remnants of the anti-Soviet parties of the Georgian Mensheviks and their like, and, abroad, with the contemptible traitor and mortal enemy of the Georgian people, and hireling of the imperialists, Noah Jordania.

The Georgian Trotskyites stooped to the basest and most criminal means of struggle against the Party, Soviet power and the people. They carried on systematic wrecking, diversion and espionage in various spheres of Georgia's socialist construction.

These vile traitors and murderers, the Georgian Trotskyite counter-revolutionaries, tried to sell out the Georgian people wholesale and retail, intent on surrendering Georgia to the European imperialist sharks to be plundered and rent, intent on making Georgia and Transcaucasia a colony of imperialism and casting the bloody yoke of fascism upon the free and happy Georgian nation.

And this foul riff-raff, this rabid gang of spies, bandits and wreckers, who have lost all traces of humanity, tried to pose as spokesmen of the Georgian nation!

Our Party and our Soviet government destroyed this snakes' nest of fascist hirelings with an iron hand—in true Stalinist style.

The Transcaucasian Bolsheviks went through a thorough schooling in the struggle against national deviationism and, after defeating the nationalists and national deviationists, formed a strong Transcaucasian Federation—a sovereign instrument of peace between the nationalities, of joint socialist construction and the economic and cultural renaissance of the nations of Transcaucasia.

In 1936, with the adoption of the Stalin Constitution of the U.S.S.R., the Transcaucasian Federation was dissolved, and the republics of Transcaucasia—Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia—entered the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics directly, as Union republics with sovereign rights.

The abolition of the Transcaucasian Federation was a direct result of the achievements and victories of the general line, and in particular of the national policy of our Party, achievements and

victories won in the years of the revolution in the process of socialist construction in the republics of Transcaucasia.

The Transcaucasian Federation had performed a historical role, completely solving the tasks set before it. The Republics of Transcaucasia have become industrial-agrarian republics. The collective farm system prevails in the agriculture of Transcaucasia. Enormous progress has been made in developing national culture. The Republics of Transcaucasia have produced Bolshevik national cadres that are wholly devoted to the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

Having broadened the economic and cultural ties of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia with the other Republics, Territories and Regions of the Soviet Union, the victories of socialist construction prepared the conditions for the abolition of the Transcaucasian Federation and the direct entrance of the Transcaucasian Republics into the Soviet Union.

The new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. ensures the further strengthening of the friendship between the nations of Transcaucasia and the whole Soviet Union, it ensures great new achievements on the part of the national policy of Lenin and Stalin.

Thus:

1) *National deviationism in the ranks of the Bolshevik, Communist Party of Georgia represented a Right-opportunist trend, which reflected the pressure of bourgeois-nationalist Menshevik elements upon certain sections of our Party organization.*

*Having entered upon the path of struggle against the Party, the national-deviationist opposition lapsed into the position of Georgian Menshevism.*

2) *National deviationism represented aggressive chauvinism, reflecting the Great-Power bourgeois nationalism of the Georgian Mensheviks and national-democrats.*

*Having entered upon the path of struggle against the national policy of Lenin and Stalin, the national deviationists fought furiously against the Transcaucasian Federation and the autonomy of Abkhazia, Ajaristan and South Ossetia, for the perpetuation of the oppression of the national minorities in Georgia.*

3) *In the agrarian and peasant question the national deviationists reflected the interests and demands of the Georgian noblemen and kulaks.*

*In defending the kulak agrarian policy, national deviationism acted as the mouthpiece and champion of the capitalist path of development for our countryside.*

4) *The national deviationists adopted an openly liberal, conciliatory position on the questions of the struggle against counter-*



revolutionary Menshevism. They substituted a policy of "peaceful re-education" and collaboration with the Mensheviks, the bitterest enemies of the workers and peasants of Georgia, for the ruthless struggle of the Party and the Soviet government against the Menshevik counter-revolutionaries—the direct agents and accomplices of international imperialism.

5) The danger of national deviationism lay in the fact that if it had been victorious it would have strengthened the survivals of serfdom in the countryside, would have reinforced the position of the kulaks, would have made Georgia and Transcaucasia an arena of friction and bloody conflicts among its nationalities, would have undermined the united inter-national front of the Soviet Republics against imperialism, would have unleashed the reactionary forces of the Mensheviks and bourgeois nationalists, and in this way would have paved the way to imperialist intervention and the restoration of capitalism.

6) The national deviationists lapsed into a Trotskyite-Menshevik position at the very start, fighting tooth and nail under the banner of Trotskyism against the Party of Lenin and Stalin and degenerating in the ranks of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism into hired agents of fascism, a rabid gang of spies, wreckers, diversionists, murderers, vile betrayers and enemies of the people.

7) Armed with the national program of Lenin and Stalin, the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia and the Communist Party of Georgia (Bolsheviks) defeated and crushed the national deviationists, raised the indestructible edifice of the fraternal collaboration of the peoples of Transcaucasia, established and consolidated the Transcaucasian Federation, a "model of peace among the nationalities unprecedented under the bourgeoisie and impossible under the bourgeois system." (Lenin.)

8) After forming a strong Transcaucasian Federation, under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, the Bolsheviks of Transcaucasia succeeded in attaining enormous achievements in socialist construction and great victories for the socialist system in the Republics of Transcaucasia, thereby making conditions ripe for the abolition of the Transcaucasian Federation and the incorporation of the republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in accordance with the great Stalin Constitution.

(Loud and prolonged applause. All rise. The hall resounds with shouts of "Long Live the Great Stalin!" "Hurrah for Comrade Stalin!" "Long Live the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party!")

## **A P P E N D I X**



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## ON THE QUESTION OF THE PRAGUE CONFERENCE

### *A Reply to Various Comrades*

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In my report "On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia," I said:

"The Prague Conference of the Bolsheviks marks a turning point in the history of Bolshevism, for it made the split with Menshevism official, expelled the Liquidator-Mensheviks from the Party and laid the foundation for the existence of the Bolshevik Party."

Several comrades—G. Demchenko (Moscow), J. Yunover (Leningrad), Sakharov (Baku), Likhachov (Kirovabad), Mshvenieradze (Tiflis), Akopov (Ijevan), and others—have requested me to explain this passage in my report.

Some of these comrades (Comrades Yunover, Demchenko and others) write that this passage is not clear to them, and is open to doubt. Thus, for instance, Comrade Yunover writes:

"Dear Comrade Beria,

"While staying at the 'Fourth of March' Sanatorium No. 4 at Sukhum, I read your brilliant and profound report. I am writing because I was somewhat puzzled by one passage in the report. In the third chapter of the report 'On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia' the following passage occurs:

"The Prague Conference of the Bolsheviks marks a turning point in the history of Bolshevism, for it made the split with Menshevism official, expelled the Liquidator-Mensheviks from the Party and laid the foundation for the existence of the Bolshevik Party.'

"In my work as propagandist I have been giving a different explanation of the quintessence of the Prague Conference. Can it be asserted that 'it made the split with Menshevism official'? But the part that puzzles me most is where it says that it 'laid the foundation for the existence of the Bolshevik Party.' Do you not consider it possible to word this passage more precisely, especially since the text books on Party history do not always give a clear analysis of the significance of the Prague

Conference? Your explanations will be of great assistance to me in my future work."

Other comrades (Comrades Sakharov, Likhachov and Akopov) consider the statement I made incorrect, and find that the formulation in question contradicts Lenin's well-known dictum that "Bolshevism, as a trend of political thought and as a political party, exists since 1903."\* Thus, for instance, Com. Sakharov writes:

"In speaking of the Prague Conference of the Bolsheviks, you conclude that it 'laid the foundation for the existence of the Bolshevik Party.' This, I think, is not accurate. It is quite correct that the Prague Conference was a turning point in the history of Bolshevism, that in 1912 an end was put to the formal alliance between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, which had been in effect since the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. But it is likewise generally known that Bolshevism had its origin, as an ideological trend, as early as the 'nineties, in Lenin's struggle against the legal Marxism of P. Struve, against Narodism, Economism, that it established itself in the period of the old *Iskra*; Bolshevism has been in existence as a political party since the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. . . .

"The phrase that the Prague Conference 'laid the foundation for the existence of the Bolshevik Party' obviously was simply an inaccurate expression, or possibly a slip of the pen; at any rate this is indisputably proven by the report itself. This phrase ought therefore to be corrected."

Bolshevism as a trend of political thought and as a political party has been in existence since the Second Congress of the Party. In the struggle against the Mensheviks for Lenin's program, tactics and organizational principles, the Bolsheviks pursued the line of a split, of a break with the Menshevik-opportunists since 1903, when the Bolshevik faction was formed. This policy was confirmed both in the struggle for the convocation of the Third Congress and at the Third Party Congress itself, at which resolutions were adopted "On the Split-off Section of the Party," "On Preparing the Conditions for a Fusion with the Mensheviks" and "On the Dissolution of Committees Which Shall Refuse to Accept the Decisions of the Third Congress."

\* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. X, "'Left-Wing' Communism, An Infantile Disorder," p. 61.

These resolutions stated:

1) "*On the Split-off Section of the Party*":

"The Congress declares that since the time of its fight against Economism, certain trends have been retained in the R.S.D.L.P. which, in various degrees and in various respects, are shadings akin to Economism, characterized by a common tendency to belittle the importance of the elements of consciousness in the proletarian struggle and to subordinate it to the elements of spontaneity. On questions of organization, the representatives of these shadings put forward, in theory, the principle of organization as a process, which is at variance with the planned character of Party work, while in practice they systematically deviate from Party discipline in very many cases, and in other cases preach the broad application of the elective principle to the least enlightened section of the Party, without taking into consideration the objective conditions of Russian life, and so strive to undermine the only possible basis for Party ties at the present time. In tactical questions they manifest themselves by their endeavour to circumscribe the scope of Party work, taking a stand against completely independent Party tactics towards the liberal bourgeois parties, against the possibility and desirability of our Party assuming the role of organizer in the people's uprising, against the participation of the Party in a provisional democratic-revolutionary government under any conditions whatsoever.

*"The Congress charges all Party members to wage an energetic ideological struggle everywhere against such partial deviations from the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy; at the same time it is of the opinion that persons who share such views in some measure or other may participate in Party organizations provided they recognize Party congresses and the Party rules and wholly submit to Party discipline."* (My italics.—L.B.)

2) "*On Preparing the Conditions for a Fusion With the Mensheviks*":

"The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. commissions the C.C. to take all measures for preparing and drawing up the conditions for fusion with the section of the R.S.D.L.P. that has split off, these conditions to be submitted to a new Party congress for final approval."

3) "*On the Dissolution of Committees Which Shall Refuse to Accept the Decisions of the Third Congress*":

“In view of the possibility that some Menshevik organizations may refuse to accept the decisions of the Third Congress, the Congress instructs the C.C. to dissolve such organizations, and to sanction as committees parallel organizations which shall submit to the Congress, *but only after it shall have been fully established by careful investigation that the Menshevik organizations and committees are unwilling to submit to Party discipline.*” \* (My italics.—L.B.)

All this bears out the fact that although at the Third Congress the Bolshevik faction was still more consolidated and the policy of splitting with the Mensheviks was confirmed, the Bolsheviks had at that time not yet brought the split to the point of the complete and final abolition of formal unity with the Mensheviks, which took place later, at the Prague Conference in 1912.

It is likewise a known fact that while fighting “in most determined fashion against confusing the two sections of the Party” (Lenin), the Bolsheviks adopted a resolution at the Tammorfors Party Conference (1905) to merge the Party centres. This resolution stated:

“(1) For the purpose of practical amalgamation and as a provisional measure until the Unity Congress, the Conference proposes the immediate and simultaneous fusion of the practical (centres) and central press organs on an equal footing, members of the editorial board being allowed to be members of the practical centre.

“The editorial board is to be guided by the instructions of the common centre. Whenever one-third of the editors want the editorial board to print their individual opinion, the board must do so with a corresponding editorial reservation.

“(2) The Conference is in favour of the immediate fusion of the local parallel organizations.

“(3) *On the convocation of a unity congress.* The united Central Committees and Organizational Committees, or the joint council of the C.C. and the O.C., if there shall have been no fusion, shall immediately announce the summoning of a unity congress of the R.S.D.L.P. with a view to convening the congress as soon as possible. Representation at the unity congress is to be elective and proportional. All members of Party organizations may take part in the election of the delegates, which shall be by direct and secret vote.” \*\*

\* *The C.P.S.U.(B.) in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, pp. 48, 54, Russ. ed.

\* *Ibid.*, pp. 58-9.

The Fourth Party Congress (1906) has gone down in the history of our Party as the Unity Congress. The C.C. elected by this Congress consisted of seven Mensheviks and three Bolsheviks. The Fifth (London) Congress was also a united congress; the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. which was elected at this Congress consisted of five Bolsheviks, four Mensheviks, two members from the S.-D.P. of Poland and Lithuania and one member from the Social-Democrats of Latvia.

In this connection one should also recall the decisions of the Conference of the Enlarged Editorial Board of *Proletary* in 1909, referring to the question of the methods and tactics of our Party in the struggle against the Mensheviks prior to the Prague Conference. (It is a known fact that the Enlarged Editorial Board of *Proletary* was actually the Bolshevik centre elected at a meeting of the faction held at the close of the London Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.)

The resolution of this Conference, "The Tasks of the Bolsheviks in the Party," stated:

"At the present time, in laying down the fundamental tasks of the Bolsheviks, the Enlarged Editorial Board of *Proletary* declares:

"(1) That in the further struggle for the Party and the Party spirit, the task of the Bolshevik faction, which must remain the foremost champion of the Party spirit and of the revolutionary Social-Democratic line in the Party, is actively to support the Central Committee and the central organ of the Party in every way. In the present period of the regrouping of Party forces, only the central institutions of the entire Party can serve as the authoritative and strong representative of the Party line around which all the genuine Party and Social-Democratic elements can be rallied;

"(2) That in the Menshevik camp of the Party, with the official organ of the faction, the *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata* [*Voice of the Social-Democrat*], completely captive to the Menshevik Liquidators, the minority of the faction, having explored the path of Liquidationism to the very end, is already raising its voice in protest against this path and is again seeking a Party basis for its activities (the letter of the 'Vyborg' Mensheviks in St. Petersburg, the split among the Mensheviks in Moscow, the split in the Editorial Board of *Golos Sotsial-Demokrata*, the corresponding division in the *Bund*, etc.);

"(3) That under such circumstances, the task of the Bol-



sheviks, who will remain the solid vanguard of the Party, is not only to continue the struggle against Liquidationism and all the varieties of revisionism, but also to establish closer contact with the Marxian and Party elements of the other factions, in accordance with the dictates of the common aims in the struggle for the preservation and consolidation of the R.S.D.L.P.”\*

The same idea also pervades the resolution of the Conference “On Agitation for a Bolshevik Congress or a Bolshevik Conference Apart From the Party,” which stated the following:

“In view of the fact:

“That ever since Party unity was restored the Bolshevik faction has always put forth and rallied the adherents of its political line on questions which have already become the subject of general Party discussion, and has always done so by means of an ideological struggle on the general-Party arena for its decision on these questions—parallel platforms and discussions in the Party nuclei, and at general Party congresses;

“That this is the only way to guarantee both the solidarity of those who are really of one mind and the drawing in of all elements essentially akin to it into the faction;

*“That for the realization of our principal aim, for the exertion of influence on the Party in the interests of the final victory in it of the revolutionary Social-Democratic line, the Bolsheviks should stand forth only on the general Party arena, this being the only correct and the only expedient way (my italics.—L. B.);*

“That any other way—such as the calling of separate Bolshevik conferences and congresses—would inevitably lead to a split in the Party from top to bottom, and would cause irreparable damage to the faction that would assume the initiative in such a final split of the R.S.D.L.P.;

“In view of all this, the Enlarged Editorial Board of *Proletary* resolves:

“(1) To warn all its followers against agitation for a special Bolshevik congress, this being agitation which objectively leads to a split in the Party, and which is capable of causing decided damage to the position which revolutionary Social-Democracy has already gained in the Party.

“(2) To hold the next conference of the Bolsheviks at the same time as the next regular Party conference, while the

\* *Ibid.*, p. 151.

meeting of the faction's adherents at the next Party congress is to be the supreme body of the faction as a whole.

"(3) In view of the important questions on the agenda agitating the Party and the faction, the Bolsheviks in the C.C. are instructed to insist on the earliest possible convocation of a general Party conference (a time limit of two-three months) and after that on the speedy summons of a Party Congress."\*

Prior to the Prague Conference, Bolshevism, which had existed as a trend of political thought and as a political party since 1903, fought Menshevism within the framework of a formally common party, a party united with the Mensheviks, making use of the general-Party arena to expose the Mensheviks, to wrest from them the workers deceived by them, to defeat Menshevism.

At all stages of this struggle the Bolsheviks maintained and preserved the actual independence of their Party organization, without becoming confounded with the Mensheviks; but formally the Bolsheviks were in a joint party until 1912.

At the Prague Conference, which marked the official split with the Mensheviks, the Bolsheviks left forever the organizational framework of the united Party with the common Central Committee at its head. The Conference thereby marked the official separation of the Bolsheviks into a separate Social-Democratic Party headed by its own Central Committee.

The Mensheviks did everything in their power to split the working class of Russia, weaken it and make it a pliant tool in the hands of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie. In opposition to this policy of splitting the labour movement, the Bolsheviks set up their line of splitting with the Mensheviks, of exposing the treachery of the Mensheviks and rallying the working class to the banner of revolutionary Social-Democracy—the banner of the Leninist Party.

At the Prague Conference the Bolsheviks finally expelled the Liquidator-Mensheviks from the Party and *forever put an end to all remnants of official unity with the Mensheviks. Therefore, beginning with the Prague Conference, Bolshevism became an independent party officially. This is the gist of the matter.*

This independence of the Bolshevik Party not only in essence but also in form, achieved by breaking every organizational tie with the Mensheviks, is of paramount importance for an understanding of the methods and tactics of our Party which assured the defeat of Menshevism.

\* *Ibid.*, pp. 152-53.

Thus, in speaking of the forms and methods of combating the Mensheviks before and after the final split, Lenin said:

“A split means the rupture of all organizational ties, the shifting of the struggle of ideas from the ground of influencing the organization from within to that of influencing it from without, from the ground of correcting and persuading comrades to that of destroying their organization, to the ground of inciting the masses of the workers (and the masses of the people generally) against the seceded organization. . . .

“If anyone were to apply the measure of the permissible internal Party struggle to the struggle based on a split, a struggle directed against the Party from without or (in the case of a local split) against the given Party organization, such a person would have to be regarded either as being childishly naive, or as a hypocrite. From the organizational point of view, a split signifies a rupture of *all* organizational ties, *i.e.*, the transition from a struggle to convince comrades within the organization to a struggle *to destroy* the hostile organization, to destroy its influence over the masses of the proletariat. From the psychological standpoint it is perfectly obvious that the severance of all organizational ties between comrades *already* signifies an *extreme degree* of mutual bitterness and hostility, which has grown into hatred.”\*

This is how Lenin put the question in connection with the split in the St. Petersburg organization of the R.S.D.L.P.

There is no need to prove that this manner of posing the question applies so much the more to the struggle of our Party against Menshevism in the period of the Prague Conference, which consummated the split with the Mensheviks and consequently supplied the formal organizational basis for the separate, independent existence of the Bolshevik Party.

This is why the Prague Conference was a turning point in the history of Bolshevism.

This is why the Prague Conference laid the foundation for the independent existence of the Bolshevik Party.

*Pravda*, October 26, 1935

\* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, “Speech for the Defence (or for the Prosecution of the Menshevik Section of the Central Committee) Delivered at the Party Trial,” pp. 490, 492, Co-operative Publishing Society, Moscow, 1934.

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## CHRONOLOGY OF COMRADE STALIN'S ARRESTS, EXILES AND ESCAPES

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- 1902—April 5 . . . Comrade Stalin is arrested in Batum (first arrest).
- 1903—April 19 . . . Comrade Stalin is transferred to the Kutais Provincial prison.
- 1903—November . . . Comrade Stalin is exiled for three years to the Province of Irkutsk, East Siberia, via Batum and Novorossiisk (first exile).
- 1904—January 5 . . . Comrade Stalin escapes from exile (from Baglansk, Irkutsk Province) and goes first to Batum and later to Tiflis (first escape).
- 1908—March 25 . . . Comrade Stalin is arrested in Baku under the name of Gaijoza Nizharadze. Comrade Stalin is sent to the Bailov prison (second arrest).
- 1908—September 20 Comrade Stalin is exiled for two years to the city of Solvychevodsk in the Vologda Province (second exile).
- 1909—June 24 . . . Comrade Stalin escapes from the Vologda Province (second escape).
- 1910—March 23 . . . Comrade Stalin is arrested in Baku (third arrest).
- 1910—August 27 . . . By order of the Vice-Regent of the Caucasus, Comrade Stalin is forbidden to reside within the limits of the Caucasian region for a period of five years.
- 1910—September 23 Comrade Stalin is exiled to the city of Solvychevodsk in the Vologda Province (third exile).
- 1911—July 6 . . . Comrade Stalin escapes from exile (third escape).
- 1911—September 9 Comrade Stalin is arrested in St. Petersburg (fourth arrest).
- 1911—December 14 Comrade Stalin is exiled to the city of Solvychevodsk in the Vologda Province (fourth exile).
- 1912—February 29 Comrade Stalin escapes from exile (fourth escape).
- 1912—April 22 . . . Comrade Stalin is arrested in St. Petersburg (fifth arrest).
- 1912—beginning of summer Comrade Stalin is exiled for four years to the Naryn Territory (fifth exile).

- 1912—Summer . . . Comrade Stalin escapes from exile (from Narym) and returns to St. Petersburg (fifth escape).
- 1913—March—April Comrade Stalin is arrested in St. Petersburg (sixth arrest).
- 1913—June . . . . Comrade Stalin is exiled for four years under police surveillance to the Turukhan Territory (sixth exile).
- 1913—June  
to
- 1917—February . . Comrade Stalin in exile in the Turukhan Territory.

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## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> G. Tsereteli (1842-1900), together with N. Nikoladze and S. Meskhi, headed the "Meori Dassy" (Second Group)—a bourgeois-progressive trend.

The "Meori Dassy" published the newspaper *Droyeba* (1866-86) and the journals *Mnatobi* (1869-72) and *Krebuli* (1871-73) in the Georgian language, and *Obzor* (1878-81) in the Russian language.

In their publications the Tsereteli-Nikoladze group acquainted the Georgian public with the theories of the West European utopian socialists (Fourier, Owen, Saint-Simon, Louis Blanc, Babeuf) and preached a bourgeois nationalism and republicanism.

Of this group G. Tsereteli himself wrote:

"In the development of the social system this group (dassy) repudiated the nobility as well as repudiating the individual existence of the common people. It advanced the idea of a genuine nation into which all estates entered on an equal footing, thereby recognizing that such a nation corresponded to a democratic social order where there are no separate estates." (G. Tsereteli, *Kvali*, No 46, 1897.)

This group of bourgeois intellectuals stood for the development of industrial banks, credit for town and country, trade, railways and industry. In their eyes the development of trade and industry was a means that would make for the national renaissance of the country. It called for brisk promotion of education and science and pointed to capitalist progress as the road to be followed.

In the nineties of the nineteenth century this group committed itself to service of the big bourgeoisie and support of Russian tsarism. (Page 11.)

<sup>2</sup> Ilya Chavchavadze (1837-1907), a Georgian writer and publicist, was the ideological leader of the "Pirveli Dassy" (First Group)—a feudal-progressive trend.

The Georgian journal *Sakartvelos-Moambe* began publication in 1863 under his leadership, and in 1877 the newspaper *Iberia*. Under his leadership this group carried on a struggle against the ideologists of the old nobility, who were still defending the patriarchal-feudal order.

In a number of splendid literary works, I. Chavchavadze painted a masterly picture of the slavish toil of the Georgian peasants and demanded the destruction of serfdom.

In *Iberia* the group made a resolute stand in defence of the Georgian language, Georgian letters and Georgian schools, combating the tsar's policy of Russifying Georgia.

The "Pirveli Dassy" sought to adapt the economy of the landed gentry to capitalism, and through their efforts towards this end a railway was built in Kakhetia and a noblemen's bank was opened.

The group propagated the idea of a national renaissance through peaceful collaboration between the estates.

In his programmatic article "Life and Law" (1877), Chavchavadze advanced the slogan of collaboration between the estates and exhorted the liberal nobles to head the capitalist development of Georgia. (Page 12.)

<sup>3</sup> The *Shendrikov Organization*, the so-called "Organization of

Balakhan and Bibi-Eibat Workers," was formed in Baku by the Shendrikov brothers (Ilya, Leo and Gleb) in the summer of 1904. This was a non-party organization, but its leaders openly preached Menshevism from the outset.

The Menshevik leadership of the R.S.D.L.P. through the Party Council officially recognized the Shendrikov organization as a Party organization. In 1904 the Party Council and the Menshevik *Iskra* tried to set off the Shendrikovites against the Baku Bolshevik organization.

Relying on the support of the labour aristocracy, the Shendrikov group denounced political struggle and preached outright Economism. They had all the markings of a Zubatov or Gapon organization. They disrupted political campaigns and disorganized strikes. During the December strike of 1904 the Shendrikov organization was busy extorting money from capitalists.

In the period of the revolution of 1905-07 the Shendrikov group formed a bloc with the capitalists, showing themselves agents of the tsarist authorities.

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the All-Caucasian and the Baku Committees of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) declared ruthless war on the Shendrikov group from the very outset. By the summer of 1904 the Shendrikov brothers had been expelled from the Party by the Baku Committee.

When the editors of *Iskra* tried to represent the Shendrikov organization as a legitimate organization, the All-Caucasian Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks) issued the following statement in reply, in November 1904:

"The editors of *Iskra* have been too hasty with praise for the 'group' calling itself the 'enlightened workers of Balakhan district' or the 'workers of Balakhan and Bibi-Eibat,' because closer acquaintance with its views, publications and all its activity in general would undoubtedly make the editors of *Iskra* see eye to eye with the Baku C [ommittee] and the All-Caucasian C [ommittee] which correctly considers the said 'group' non-party and its activity disruptive and pernicious." (Cf. *Vperyod*, No. 3, 1905.)

The Shendrikov organization fell to pieces in 1908 after Comrade Stalin moved to Baku. (Page 43.)

\* *Dashnaks* ("Dashnaktsutyun")—an Armenian nationalist party which arose in the early 'nineties. Its program (socialization of the land, state federation, and terrorism) closely resembled that of the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Its main slogan was for the emancipation of the Armenian nation from the tyranny of Imperial Turkey and the formation from Turkish Armenia and the Armenian regions of Transcaucasia of a "Great Armenia" under the protection of tsarist Russia.

In the beginning of 1900, under the influence of the movement for national emancipation, the Dashnaks went Left for a time and came out in opposition to tsarism.

In the period of the first Russian Revolution, the Dashnaks made open cause with the interests of the Armenian bourgeoisie and fought against the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants. At the behest of the tsarist authorities they organized an Armenian-Tyurkic massacre in Baku, Tiflis, Elizabetopol (Kirovabad) and other parts of Transcaucasia.

In a letter to Stolypin, Vice-Regent of the Caucasus Vorontsov-Dashkov characterized the activity of the "Dashnaksutyun" as follows:

"In this period the 'Dashnaksutyun' organization acquired a special, leading influence in Baku after the Armenian-Tatar disorders and the turbulent period of 1905-06. This is due to the fact that at that time in the eyes of the influential and wealthy part of the Armenian population this organization was an armed bodyguard against the Mussulmen and the anarchistic organizations engendered by the revolution, and they generously supported the Dashnaksakans financially, which explains why the latter were so well armed; besides using them as a bodyguard, the wealthier Armenians used the Dashnaksakans to guard their property and property interests, so that it would happen that in the oil fields the Dashnaksakans would break strikes by means of intimidation and, on contrary occasions, when they had it in for some industrialist who had turned down their demands for money, they made the workers on his site go on strike." (*Krassny Arkhiv*, Vol. 34, p. 206.)

During the years of reaction and in the first imperialist war the Dashnaks served as the militant vanguard of the Armenian bourgeoisie, open defenders and servants of tsarism. During the war the Dashnaks (the Armenian National Bureau, headed by Dashnaks) publicly petitioned Nicholas II to seize the Dardanelles. They formed volunteer companies and sent them to the Russo-Turkish front.

After the victory of the Great Socialist Revolution in Russia the Dashnaks joined the Georgian Mensheviks and Mussavatists in a counter-revolutionary bloc and severed Transcaucasia from Soviet Russia.

In 1918-20 the Dashnaks headed the bourgeois Republic of Armenia which had been set up by the Turkish General Staff, and made Armenia a *place d'armes* for the Anglo-French interventionists and Russian Whiteguards in their war against the Soviet government.

The Dashnaks together with the Mensheviks and Mussavatists transformed Transcaucasia into an arena of bloody strife between the nationalities; with the Georgian Mensheviks and Mussavatists they organized the Armenian-Georgian and Armenian-Tyurkic wars, and engineered raids and pogroms on the Tyurkic population of Armenia.

After Soviet rule was established in Armenia, the Dashnak Party was broken up. On the instructions of the intelligence services of the imperialist states, the surviving Dashnak scum continued to carry on a rabid struggle against the Soviet government through espionage and wrecking. (Page 48.)

<sup>5</sup> *Social-Federalists*—a Georgian nationalist party consisting of intellectuals from the bourgeoisie and nobility. It was formed at a conference in Geneva in 1904. Among the founders of the party were A. Jorjadze, K. Abashidze, G. Laskhishvili and G. Zdanovich-Mayashvili.

The main demand in the Social-Federalist program was for the national autonomy of Georgia within a Russian bourgeois and landowner state.

In the years of the first Russian Revolution the Federalists preached national autonomy, supported the liberal bourgeoisie and fought rabidly against the Bolsheviks.

In the years of reaction they completely gave up the struggle against tsarism, and during the imperialist war occupied a defencist position.



After the victory of the Great Proletarian Revolution in Russia the Federalists joined the Georgian Mensheviks, Dashnaks and Mussavatists in a counter-revolutionary bloc, which, with the support of the Germano-Turkish interventionists and, later on, of the Anglo-French interventionists, cut off Transcaucasia and Georgia from Soviet Russia.

After Soviet rule was established in Georgia, the Social-Federalist Party fell to pieces.

The sorry survivors fought viciously against Soviet rule and took an active part in the Menshevik putsch of 1924.

The leaders, who are in emigration, are in the intelligence services of foreign states together with Menshevik and Whiteguard counter-revolutionaries. (Page 48).

\* *Mussavatists* ("Mussavat")—a nationalist Tyurkic bourgeois "democratic" party. It was established in 1912 and was called the "Mussulman Democratic Party"—"Mussavat" (which means *equality*). The founders of the Party were representatives of the Tyurkic bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia: M.E. Rassul-Zadeh, G.R. Sharif-Zadeh, A.K. Kyazim-Zadeh and K.V. Mikallov. The program of the "Mussavat" was permeated with both Pan-Islamism—the ideology of Turkish, Tatar and the like khans, landowners and Mussulman mullahs, who sought to unite all the peoples professing the Mussulman religion,—and Pan-Tyurkism, which sought to unite all the Tyurkic Mussulman nationalities under the rule of the Ottoman government.

During the imperialist war the Mussavatists were ardent supporters of tsarism. One of the leaders of the Mussavatists, M. F. Rassul-Zadeh, wrote:

"Touching upon the fate of our common native land, Russia, we too, together with all other citizens, wish primarily for Russia's success and victory. . . .

"During this war the nationalities inhabiting Russia have been cleared of all doubt, and by their sincere attitude have shown that they have honest aims and feelings of ardent patriotism." (Newspaper *Achyg-Soyuz* [A Clear Word]).

After the second Russian Revolution, in 1917, the "Mussavat" merged with the Tyurkic Federalist Party of the Bek landowners and adopted the name of the Tyurkic Federalist Party, "Mussavat," demanding autonomy for Azerbaijan, and the formation of a Russian democratic republic on federative principles.

During 1918-20 the "Mussavat" constituted the main counter-revolutionary force in Azerbaijan, fighting against Soviet rule and the Bolshevik Party.

In May 1918, the Mussavatists organized a so-called "independent" bourgeois-landlord government with its centre in Gyandzheh, and waged a savage fight against the Baku Commune, enlisting the aid of the Turks and later of the British.

In 1920, on the instructions of British imperialism, the Mussavatists gave direct armed assistance to Denikin's retreating Whiteguard bands and fought against the Red Army.

In 1920 the Mussavatists and Dashnaks organized a Tyurkic-Armenian war.

When Soviet rule was established in Azerbaijan, the "Mussavat" Party was smashed and lost all influence. The émigré leaders of the Party are acting as spies for foreign states. (Page 169.)

*Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*

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